Srinagar **Thursday** March 21 | 2024 09 Ramadan 1445 Issue No: 68 Volume: 14



England at the IPL: 'Refreshed' Buttler, rusty Livingstone, and WC tune-ups for fringe player **DEO Srinagar Conducts Comprehensive Inspection Of Election Strong Rooms Cum** Distribution/Collection...

Assembly Elections in J&K will not Miss Supreme Court **Deadline: Amit Shah**

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, MAR 20: Elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be conducted before September 30, Union Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday.

Speaking at CNN-News18 Rising India Summit 2024 in New Delhi, Shah said, "Voting in Jammu and Kashmir will happen before the Supreme Court of India's deadline of September 30."

On December 11, 2023, the apex court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to conduct elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30, 2024.

"We direct that steps shall be taken to conduct elections for the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir by Sep-



tember 30, 2024, and statehood shall be restored as soon as possible," the bench said.

The last Assembly polls in J&K were held in 2014. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) formed a coalition government with the BJP. But in 2018, the BJP pulled out of the alliance and the government collapsed. Following that, the Assembly was dissolved and the Governor's Rule came into place.

On August 5, 2019, the Centre abrogated Article 370 and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into the Union Territories (UTs) of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Slamming the opposition, the Union Home Minister, at TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Since Article 370 Revocation, Over 35 Former Ministers, Legislators, **Senior Leaders Switch Sides**

Coming LS Polls Likely To Serve As Litmus Test For JK's Altered Political Landscape

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: The 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir are anticipated to be both significant and intriguing for several reasons. Primarily, following the abrogation of Article 370, it will serve as a litmus test in the altered political landscape for the first time.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), over the past five years, there has been a considerable transformation in the political dynamics of the region. During the electioneering process, one can expect to witness the emergence of contenders affiliated with non-traditional political entities challenging the dominance of established family-based parties. Notably, three newly registered parties have surfaced in Jammu and Kashmir, poised to challenge

WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY:

Maintain Oral Hygiene For Healthy Lifestyle, Advise Doctors



their parent parties. Numerous leaders, former ministers, and ex-MLAs are anticipated to actively engage in politics within this evolved political milieu. A notable trend has been the significant number of leaders, former ministers, and MLAs switching allegiances in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the revocation of Article 370, TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NEWS BRIEF

Northern Railways Slash Fare In Kashmir Valley By 50 Pc

SRINAGAR, Mar 20: As a major relief to commuters, Northern Railways on Wednesday decided to reduce the train fare in the Kashmir Valley.

"Railways have reinstated second $class\, ordinary\, fare\, on\, passenger\, trains$ in the Valley," the officials said.

 $The \, charges \, have \, dropped \, from \, 40$ to 50 per cent. Before the relief, the fare was Rs 35 from Sadura station (Anantnag district) to Srinagar. It has now come down to Rs 15.

This relief is applicable across the Valley in Kashmir and travelling by train has become highly affordable and cheap after the relief," officials said.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Sikhs Demand 'Pahari' Status For **Sikhs Living In Kashmir**

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Sikhs in Kashmir on Wednesday demanded Pahari status for the Sikh community in Kash-

The demand was made by the All Kashmir District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (AKDGPC), which was formed today.

Addressing a press conference, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Com $mittee\,chief\,Srinagar\,Jaspal\,Singh\,said$ that they demand to grant Pahari status to the Sikhs living in Kashmir.

"Why have we been ignored while granting Pahari status?" they asked. He said special job packages for

Sikh youngsters and political reservations for the community should

Demand For Kashmiri Apples Soar This Ramadan

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: With Ramadan in progress, demand for Kashmiri apples has soared across India.

Since the beginning of Ramadan, growers have started shipping apples, which were stored in cold storages, to

the rest of India. As per the growers the apples currently have a good demand across India as the holy month of Ramadan is in

"CA stored apples have a good demand right now. Right now Kashmiri apples are being shipped to the leading fruit markets of India. We still TURN ON.....PAGE 02

PM Modi, LG Manoj Sinha, DGP, Others **Greet People On Nauroz**

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Director General of Police (DGP) and political leaders



greeted people on the auspicious occasion of Nauroz.

"Navroz Mubarak! On this blessed day, I wish for everyone's joy and wellbeing. May the coming year be filled with success, growth and enhance the bond of unity in our society," Narendra Modi wrote on X.

"Warm greetings to all on the TURN ON.....PAGE 02



HT News Network

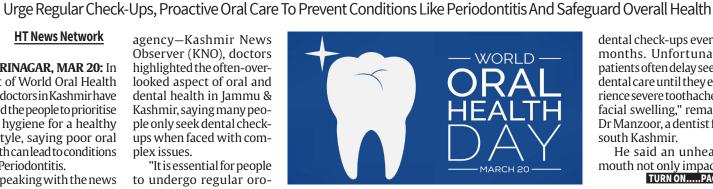
SRINAGAR, MAR 20: In light of World Oral Health Day, doctors in Kashmir have urged the people to prioritise oral hygiene for a healthy lifestyle, saying poor oral health can lead to conditions plex issues.

HT News Network

like Periodontitis

agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), doctors highlighted the often-overlooked aspect of oral and dental health in Jammu & Kashmir, saying many people only seek dental checkups when faced with com-

"It is essential for people Speaking with the news to undergo regular oro-



dental check-ups every six months. Unfortunately, patients often delay seeking dental care until they experience severe toothache and facial swelling," remarked Dr Manzoor, a dentist from south Kashmir.

He said an unhealthy mouth not only impacts
TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Widespread Light To Moderate Rain Over J&K During Next 24 Hrs: MeT

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: A Western Disturbance (WD) is likely to cause widespread light to moderate rain and snow over Jammu and Kashmir during the next 24 hours, officials said.

Meteorological Centre Srinagar on Wednesday forecast



fairly widespread light to moderate rain in Kashmir valley and parts of Jammu division during the next two days.

Kashmir weather, an independent forecaster said, "Under the influence of a WD, light to moderate rain/snow is expected to commence in parts of TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Govt Constitutes Committees For Implementation Of NUDM

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Jammu and Kashmir government has constituted the Union Territory High Powered Steering Committee and Union Territory Level Implementation Committee for implementation of the National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) in J&K.

As per the order, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Chief Secretary J&K will be the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Locals, Visitors Delight In Badamwari Garden's Almond Bloom, Welcome Spring

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: As the chill of winter gradually gives way to the gentle warmth of spring, the iconic 'Badamwari Garden' here has come alive with the breathtaking beauty of almond bloom, much to the delight of locals who eagerly anticipate this annual spectacle.



Gun License To Ineligible Persons: CBI File 2 Chargesheets Against 15 Accused

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday said to have filed two chargesheets against 15 accused in the Court of Special Judge, CBI Cases, Srinagar in an ongoing investigation of a case related to issuance of



large number of FireArms licenses in J&K to ineligible persons in violation of Rules during the period 2012-16.

As per a statement issued to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the spokesman said that the case was registered by CBI in 2018
TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Man Found Dead Under Mysterious Conditions In Sopore, Family Alleges Murder

2 Suspects Arrested, Further Investigations On: SP Sopore Divya

■ HT News Network

SOPORE, MAR 20: A family here in north Kashmir's Sopore alleged murder of their beloved son after his body was recovered under mysterious conditions from the orchards while the Police have started investigation into the

An official told the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a body has been recovered under mysterious conditions from

JKBOSE Shocker...

11th Standard Question Paper **Distributed To 12th Class Students**

GOVT CONSTITUTES COMMITTE TO PROBE THE MATTER, JKBOSE POSTPONE THE EXAMS

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: In a bizarre twist, the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Wednesday distributed Physical Education question papers of 11th standard to 12th standard candidates.

Hundreds of 12th standard candidates were left to lurch who had sleepless nights to prepare for the



annual regular exams of physical education paper.

The news agency—Kashmir News
TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NGT Issues Notices On 'Deteriorating Conditions' Of **Wetlands, Water Bodies In Kashmir**

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, MAR 20: The National Green Tribunal has issued notices to the authorities, including the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee, over the alleged deteriorating conditions of wetlands and water bodies.

The green tribunal was hearing a matter in which it had taken suo motu (on its own) cognisance of a news report highlighting the "worsening condition" of wetlands and water bodies in the Union Territory.

The report said wetlands and water bodies in the Union Territory are in decline due to both natural TURN ON.....PAGE 02



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Elections In.....

the summit, also mentioned that those who have denied democracy and welfare to Kashmir for 75 years should be punished.

Talking about BJP's performance in the upcoming Lok Sabha 2024 elections, Shah said he believes the party will give its best performance to date in Uttar Pradesh and will get more seats than in the 2014 polls.

The minister also stated that India will defeat the 'parivaar-waad' parties.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah $on We dnesday \, responded \, to \, Rahul \, Gandhi's \, `Shak$ ti'remarks and said that the Congress leader knows nor respects our tradition.

Speaking at the Network 18 Rising Bharat Summit 2024, Amit Shah said that the women of the country stand like a rock with PM Modi

"He (Rahul Gandhi) does not know what he is doing. Women power in this country stands like a rock with PM Modi. Nari Shakti has decided that this time they will show Rahul Gandhi their true strength in the elections. Rahul Gandhi neither knows nor respects our traditions. Maa Shakti has been considered the greatest power in our country for thousands of years. There can be no greater blessing than the blessings of a mother and no greater affection than the affection of a sister," he said.

"The policy of Congress is that this country should be divided into two parts, South India and North India. But Rahul need not worry, now BJP is so powerful that Congress will not be able to divide the country for the second time. We will not let the country break into pieces" he added.

Further, speaking on the Electoral Bonds, the Union Home Minister pointed out that the BJP has received Rs 6,200 crore, while Indi Alliance has also received more than Rs 6,200 crore.

"There is an allegation against us that we have received a lot of donations, this is false. We have received Rs 6,200 crore. Whereas Indi Alliance led by Rahul Baba has received more than Rs 6,200 crore. While we have 303 seats, we have governments in 17 states, but how many seats does the Indi Alliance have?" he asked.

Shah also asserted that after Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister, swift action was taken against black money.

"Out of all the properties attached by ED, only 5 per cent belong to people associated with political parties, the rest belong to people with black money. Although the properties that have been confiscated are of people associated with political parties and are also black money, but they want that no action should be taken against them," Amit

He also emphasized that whoever commits corruption will face strict action and will go to iail.

"Rs 51 crores are received from Mamata's minister's house, Rs 355 crores are received from the Congress MP's house and they say that no action should be taken. Can Rahul Baba tell the people of the country where this money is going to go? They should answer this," he added.

The Union Home Minister further added that the BJP's target in the Lok Sabha polls is to cross 400 seats. And this goal will be achieved because for the first time a Prime Minister is fulfilling the hopes, aspirations and dreams of the people of India.

"Opposition 'loves' Modi ji very much! Whenever the elections approach, they start abusing and attacking Modi ji more and more. But since 2001, it has been a record that the more they abuse him, the more strongly and beautifully the 'Lotus' blooms! This time also, the same will be repeated," he said.

(Agencies) Since Article.....

Kashmir experienced initial political upheaval. Several senior leaders distanced themselves from the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Notably, former minister Syed Altaf Bukhari, previously aligned with PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, parted ways with the PDP to establish a new entity, Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party. In the inaugural District Development Council (DDC) elections, the party demonstrated commendable performance in various regions, challenging the dominance of its parent party, the PDP. Subsequently, influential leader Ghulam Nabi Azad severed ties with the Congress to form the Democratic Progressive Azad

Party (DPAP). The emergence of DPAP stirred significant commotion within the Congress, leading to the defection of several former ministers and MLAs to Azad's camp. However, some leaders who initially joined Azad eventually returned to the Congress fold. DPAP is currently exploring electoral prospects across various constituencies, including Jammu, Udhampur, and Anantnag-Rajouri. Additionally, the Apni Party is actively considering alliance possibilities in Kashmir. Advocate Ankush Sharma's Ekam Sanatan Dharma Dal, primarily active in the Jammu division, has also emerged as a noteworthy politi-

cal entity. NC faced a setback in the Jammu division when its divisional president, Devendra Singh Rana, along with his supporters, joined the BJP in 2022. Notably, former minister Surjit Singh Salathia accompanied him, followed by former MLAs Kamal Arora and Premsagar Aziz defecting from the NC. Recently, after the hills were granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) reservation status, Dr. Shahnaz Ganai, an MLC from Poonch, formally joined the BJP. Additionally, former MLA Mushtaq Bukhari, Chaudhary Arshad, Dharamveer Singh Jamwal, Somnath Khajuria, among

others, have joined the party. In addition to Syed Altaf Bukhari, several other notable figures have severed ties with the PDP, including former minister Imran Raza Ansari, Basharat Bukhari, Abdul Rahim Rather, former Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Baig, former minister Haseeb Drabu, Javed Mustafa Mir, and Ashraf

Mir. Moreover, some relatives of Mehbooba Mufti have also disassociated themselves from the party. Consequently, NC, aligned with the INDIA alliance, has unequivocally stated its reluctance to engage in any seat-sharing agreement with the PDP. Furthermore, former MLA Sheikh Jabbar and former Deputy CM Parvez Qadri have also parted ways with the NC.

PM Modi, LG.....

auspicious occasion of Navroz. May this festival bring joy, happiness and prosperity to everyone. Navroz Mubarak!,"Office of J&K LG.

Director General of Police R.R. Swain has extended greetings to the people of Jammu Kashmir, particularly members of Shia community, families of Police Parivar and other security forces on the auspicious occasion of Nauroz.

In his message, the DGP has hoped that Nauroz will bring happiness, prosperity and progress to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, families of martyrs and police personnel. The DGP said that the beginning of a new year brings with it a sense of fresh possibilities. It gives us a chance to renew our resolution of commitment to peace.

He has prayed for peace and prosperity for lammu and Kashmir.

National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Omar Abdullah have extended warm greetings to people on the auspicious eve of Navroz e Aalam.

In their greetings message, Dr Farooq and Omar Abdullah highlighted the region's rich legacy and inheritance of brotherhood and amity. They expressed hope that the day will herald peace, prosperity and progress in J&K.

Meanwhile, NC General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar, Additional General Secretary Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamal, Treasurer Shammi Oberoi, PP Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq, party leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi have also extended warm greetings go people on Navroz e

Maintain Oral.....

general health but also has a severe impact on people's emotional, social, mental and overall physical well-being.

He explained, "Like other parts of the body, the mouth harbours germs, which, if left unchecked, can lead to infections such as tooth decay and gum disease. The mouth is the entry to the organs that allow breathing, called the respiratory tract. So, sometimes germs in the mouth can lead to disease throughout the body. That is why there is a need to maintain oral hygiene. Proper oral care, including daily brushing and flossing, is crucial to maintaining oral hygiene and preventing these conditions."

Good oral care, the doctor said, includes daily brushing and flossing. Without good oral hygiene, germs can reach levels that might lead to infections, uch as tooth decay and gum disease, he said.

Dr Manzoor said certain medicines can lower the flow of spit called saliva. "Those medicines include decongestants, antihistamines, painkillers, water pills and antidepressants. Poor oral hygiene can contribute to various health issues, including endocarditis, cardiovascular disease, pregnancy complications, pneumonia, and more," he said, adding that certain health conditions also might affect oral health, including diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Similarly, Dr Shahnawaz said that pathogenic bacteria responsible for dental infections can spread via the bloodstream, potentially causing infections in vital organs. He said Periodontitis, a disease affecting the supporting tissues of teeth, can lead to chronic inflammation and pose risks for heart problems, diabetes complications, COVID-19 complications, and other health issues.

"Harmful bacteria and their byproducts can travel through the bloodstream, causing direct damage to different organs or triggering inflammation throughout the body," he said.

He explained that the primary cause of gum disease is bacterial infection, which, if not addressed, can progress to Periodontitis, leading to the deterioration of the tooth's supporting structures.

Dr Shahnawaz stressed the importance of addressing gum disease promptly to mitigate its potential adverse effects on both oral and overall health. He called for regular dental check-ups and proactive oral hygiene practices.

The doctors cautioned against self-medicating for tooth infections. They also said tobacco and smoking have detrimental effects on oral health and urged people to prioritize oral hygiene for a healthy lifestyle.

To maintain oral health, doctors recommend brushing teeth at least twice a day for two minutes each time, cleaning between teeth, consuming a healthy diet low in sugary foods and drinks, replacing toothbrushes every three months, and scheduling dental check-ups at least once a year.

Widespread Light.....

Kashmir from tomorrow afternoon onwards, and by the evening, most parts of Kashmir Valley would have received a spell of rain/snow. Rain/snow activities can continue in some areas on March 22".

He said the least impact of WD is expected in Jammu, Samba, and Kathua districts, too. There is a possibility of hailstorms and gusty winds in some areas during this period.

The MeT said the weather will generally remain dry on March 23, while it will turn generally cloudy with light rain and snow at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir on March 24, while light rain and snow at a few places on March 27 and 28.

The weather is pleasant, with a bright sun shining on Wednesday in Kashmir Valley amid the spring season and buds on flower trees blossoming

in various parks and gardens. The night temperature improved further at most of the stations but remained below normal, while the day temperature recorded 5-8°C above normal in Kashmir Valley on the previous day.

Srinagar recorded a low of 4.2°C against 2.2 °C recorded during the intervening nights of Tuesday and Wednesday. It was still 0.5°C below normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

Qazigund on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway had a low of 2.4°C, and the picnic spot of Kokernag in south Kashmir recorded a low of 4.0°C on Wednesday.

Pahalgam remained the coldest place in the Kashmir Valley, with a low of -1.1°C against the -0.9°C recorded a day ago. It was 1.2°C below normal for the famous tourist hot spot of south Kashmir.

The night temperature improved at Gulmarg and settled at -0.8°C against -1.0°C the previous night, and it was 1.3°C above normal for the famous ski resort of north Kashmir's Baramulla district on

Kupwara recorded a low of 1.9°C against the .5°C on the previous night. It was 1.2°C below normal for the frontier Kashmir district on Wednesday, the MeT office said. (UNI)

Govt Constitutes.....

Chairman of High Powered Steering Committee while Commissioner Secretary Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) will be Chairperson of implementing committee.

The other members of the committee include Principal Secretary to the Government, Finance Department, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department. Commissioner/Secretary to the Government. Information Technology Department, Commissioner, JMC/SMC, Vice Chairman, JDA/SDA, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu/Kashmir, Special Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (or their representative) and Informatics Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Nodal Officer (NUDM) J&K will be member secretary of the committee.

The Committee can co-opt any other member(s), as may be deemed necessary and terms of reference of the committee will be to meet once every six months to provide overall guidance, to provide decisions on inter-departmental coordination issues, to provide/review availability of funds and to review the progress, provide feedback and guidance for implementation of the National Urban Digital Mis-

The members of UT level implementation committee will be Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Information Technology Department, Commissioner, JMC/SMC, vice Chairman, JDA/SDA, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu/Kashmir, Special Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department, Director Finance, Housing & Urban Development Department, Representative of Finance Department (not below the rank of the Additional Secretary), Joint Director (Planning), Housing & Urban Development Department, Director, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (or their representative), additional secretary (law), housing and urban development department and Team leader/Technical Head, SPMU(KPMG) while Informatics Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Nodal Officer (NUDM), J&K will be member secretary of the committee.

The Committee can co-opt any other member(s), as may be deemed and terms of reference will be to meet once every two months to review progress under National Urban Digital Mission, to align various stakeholders with the mission requirements, to review and recommend reforms, provide guidance on legal and other requirements and to assist in removing bottlenecks and finally approve the system development.

Locals, Visitors.....

"For us Kashmiris, the blooming of almond trees in Badamwari Garden is a cherished and beautiful view that marks the beginning of spring," said Aazan, a resident of Zafran Colony Srinagar. "It's a sight that fills our hearts with joy and reminds us of the resilience of our land."

Rahul, one of the visitors from Mumbai, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the enchanting beauty of Badamwari Garden's almond bloom, and the arrival of spring is like seeing heaven with your naked eves.

The vibrant hues of pink and white blossoms against the backdrop of snow-capped mountains evoke a sense of wonder and reverence among the people.

The beauty of Badamwari Garden during almond bloom is unparalleled, Sahil, a local said, adding that it is like stepping into a fairytale, where every tree is adorned with delicate flowers.

Families are gathered amidst the blossoms to celebrate the arrival of spring, and the air is filled with a festive look.

Gun License.....

on the request of the then State Government of Jammu&Kashmir and further notification of DoPT, Govt of India, transferring to CBI investigation of FIR No.18 of 2018 dated 17.05.2018 registered in Vigilance Organisation Kashmir (VOK). The matter pertains to issuance of large number of arms license to ineligible persons without due process during the period 2012 to 2016, it said.

"One of the charge sheets was filed under various sections of RPC, PC Act & Arms Act against 10 accused including the then District Magistrate, Kupwara, 4 gun house dealers and middleman while another charge sheet was filed under similar sections against the then ADM, Kupwara and 4 others including gun house dealer and middlemen for issuance of large number of such licenses to ineligible persons," the statement said.

Investigation disclosed the nexus of then Licensing Authority/District Magistrate with middlemen and other gun house dealers. In furtherance of the criminal conspiracy, the gun house dealers lured the defence personnel posted at far away places in the country and got their arms license issued from district Kupwara in an illegal manner, despite those personnel neither being resident of the State nor posted in the district, without police verification. Alleged illegal gratification per license were sought and collected by the gun house dealers and middlemen, the statement

Issuance of large number of arms licenses in a bordering district like Kupwara in illegal manner to ineligible persons is a matter of grave concern and poses serious threat to law & order and public safety, it said, adding that further investigation is going on.

Man Found.....

Duroo orchards, and was subsequently taken to Sub District Hospital, Sopore.

Following the legal-medico formalities, the body was handed over to the family for the last rites, officials said, adding that the investigations related to the incident are going on in full swing.

The deceased was identified as Mushtaq Ahmed Mir son of Ghulam Rasool Mir of Duroo

Mir, who has left behind five children, three daughters and two sons, went missing in the evening hours and subsequently police were informed following which the search operation was launched, said the deceased's brother Mohammed Rafi.

Those who killed him are not humans but beasts and they should be taken to task, he

While thanking the relentless efforts of Police especially SDPO Sopore Sarfaraz Ahmed, SHO Sopore Nissar Ahmed and DO Warpora Bilal Rashid, Mir said that they left no stone unturned to trace his brother, however, he hoped that police will bring the murderers to

SeniorSuperintendent of Police(SP)Sopore, Divya D (IPS) while speaking to the reporters said that they received a missing complaint from family and instantly multiple search teams were formed led by SDPO Sopore, SHO Sopore and DO Warpora.

The searches were followed whole night and the body was recovered this morning near the deceased's home, she said, adding that the deceased had multiple head injuries.

"During the course of investigations, two suspects were picked up for questioning and are currently under custody," SP said, adding that "we didn't find any terror angle in this case but it seems more a personal one during preliminary investigations. We are on it and investigations are going on in full swing", Divya

11th Standard.....

Observer (KNO) spoke to some of exam in-charges and candidates appearing in the annual regular exams of 12th standard who expressed concern about the lackadaisical approach of board.

One of the students said that the examination pattern of the physical education was entirely different as was shown and notified by the board.

"Ironically, only two marks were taken from the 12th standard syllabus. Rest the question paper of 12th standard was set from 11th standard syllabus," she said.

One of the exam in-charge said that students in the center were crying 'even a couple of students fainted'.

Officials of IKBOSE said, "We have postponed the exams and will issue the notification in while."

"We got the information of the issue and we have decided to reschedule the exams. New dates will be issued soon," the official

Meanwhile school education department has constituted a committee to enquire about the distribution of wrong question paper.

Administrative Secretary, School Education Department Piyush Singla accordingly accorded the constitution of committee, comprising of Directors of School Education of both Jammu and Kashmir regions.

Singla said that the shall enquire into the incident of wrong distribution of 11th class question paper to 12th class students appeared in the Board examination on March-20-2024 by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education.

It also said that the committee shall look into circumstances of the cancellation of the examination and the responsibility shall be fixed on supervisory and administrative level for the negligence.

"The committee shall co-opt any Chief Education Officer and other officer and submit its findings report to the administrative within seven days," it reads.

NGT Issues.....

and man-made causes such as rising temperatures, unchecked deposition of millions of tons of sediments annually, encroachment and waste discharge.

It also claimed pollution in water bodies such as Dal, Wular, Anchar and Manasbal lakes and wetlands, including Haigam Rakh in the Jhelum Valley, Hokersar near Srinagar and Shalbug in the central district of Ganderbal.

Abench of National Green Tribunal Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and Expert Member A Senthil Vel said, "The news item reflects the need for effective management of wetlands and water bodies and swift and tangible measures to ensure their sustain-

It also raised a "substantial issue" related to compliance with the environmental norms and implementation of the provisions of the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules and the Environment (Protection) Act.

In an order passed last week, the tribunal impleaded as parties several authorities, including member secretaries of the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee and the Central Pollution Control Board, the secretary of the Union Territory's Forest, Ecology and Environment department and the regional officer of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

"Let notice be issued to the above respondent for filing their response at least one week before the next date of hearing (on May 22)," the tribunal said.

It noted that are port was submitted by theJammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee regarding the monitoring of nine wetlands - Hokarsar, Mirgund, Manibugh, Freshkoori, Chattlam, Kranchoo, Shallbugh, Hygam and Manasbal.

The committee, however, did not "disclose the physicochemical and biological, including bacteriological, data in terms of numeric values which may be needed for proper assessment of water bodies", the tribunal noted. (Agencies)

Northern Railways.....

The rail services are presently operating from Baramulla town in the north of the Valley to Sangaldan in Ramban district of the Jammu division. (Agencies)

Sikhs Demand.....

also be announced.

He also demanded the implementation of Punjabi in schools and heritage status for

gurdwaras in Amira Kadal and Maharajganj. "We have taken this pledge to take forward our genuine demands with the government from the platform of AKDGPC," SGPC chief Srinagar said.

He alleged that the government did not pay any attention to the Sikh community in the Kashmir Valley.

"Sikh youths are not being provided jobs," Jaspal said, and "demanded a similar package like Kashmiri pandits be announced for the community.".

He said the Sikhs have to live and die in Kashmir and never think of leaving here. He said that during the delimitation process, the Sikh community was ignored in Jammu and

Jaspal said that the Sikh vote during the coming assembly elections would be decisive.

"If the community is not being taken care of, the Sikh vote would become a decisive force during the assembly elections," he said, adding, "We will stand with our members in the assembly elections.".

He said there are so many self-styled organisations that are representing the community despite not being aware of the ground

realities of the Sikhs in Kashmir. "Our pleas are not properly reaching the ears of the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir, so we have decided to form a joint committee of all districts that will work under the KDG-PC banner and put forth the demands of Sikhs

before the government," he said. (UNI) Demand For.....

have a huge quantity of apple still stored in cold chain facilities ready to be shipped to the various markets of India," President North Kashmir Fruit Growers and Dealers Association, Fayaz Ahmad Malik, told news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

With Ramadan being a time of increased consumption of fruits and other nutritious foods, Kashmiri apples have become a staple on iftar tables in many households.

According to reports, the demand for Kashmiri apples has soared in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bengaluru. Apple growers said the rate of apples

ranges between Rs 1500-1600 in various fruit markets in India. 'CA-stored apples get a good price since they become available in various cities of India

costs from Rs 1500-1600," Malik said. Apple growers said Ramadan often proves to be a lucrative season for Kashmiri apples

during the off-season. Right now an apple box

given its demand in various cities of India. "During the current season, only Kashmiri apples become available in the markets of India. So, growers ship a bulk quantity of apples to various fruit markets. The CA-stored apples will hit markets for the next three months," said Shabir Ahmad Khan, an apple grower who too has preferred to ship his CA stored apple to New Delhi's Azadpur fruit

Mandi during Ramadan. CA stores have come as a shot in the arm for apple growers of Kashmir, who get good

returns of the crop during the off-season. As per the apple growers all the CA stores were occupied at full capacity as the rates of apples this season have been comparatively







DEO Srinagar Conducts Comprehensive Inspection Of Election Strong Rooms Cum Distribution/ Collection Centres

Takes Onsite Stock Of Election Preparedness, Facilities

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: The District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat on Wednesday conducted comprehensive inspection of proposed election Strong Rooms cum Collection/ Distribution Centres being established for all 08 Assembly constituencies of Srinagar District.

The inspection was undertaken to assess the preparedness for smooth conduct of the upcoming Lok Sabha Election-2024 in the District.

Duringthevisit, the DEO/DC took onsite review of the arrangements and facilities at Strong Room cum Collection/

Distribution Centres for all 08 Assembly Constituencies viz 19-Hazratbal, 20-Khanyar, 21-Habbakadal, 22-LalChowk, 23-Chanapora, 24-Zadibal, 25-Eidgah and 26-Central Shalteng.

During the inspection, the DEO stressed upon the concerned Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) to take up necessary measures to ensure that all required arrangements are put in place well in advance to facilitate smooth and efficient election process.

He asked them to make properarrangements for polling staff, adequate parking and



separate entry/exit of the vehicles carrying election material at Strong Rooms cum Collection/ Distribution Centres.

He also laid emphasis on placing adequate spaces for counters to be placed at Collection/Distribution Centres in order to avoid any cluttering during distribution/collection of election materials.

While interacting with the AROs and other concerned staff, the DEO/DC underensuring that all Strong Rooms cum Collection/Distribution Centres adhere to prescribed standards of Elec-

tion Commission of India to uphold the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

He stressed on proper handling/management of election material besides ensuring efficient and secure mechanisms for its storage.

Additional Deputy Commissioner(ARO/ERO-Zadibal), Dr Khalid Hussain Malik, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ARO/ERO- Hazratbal), Syed Ahmad Kataria, Deputy Disscored the importance of trictElectionOfficer, MirImtiyaz Ul Aziz, Other AROs, and other concerned officers accompanied the DEO during

Sajad Lone leads another significant Block-**Level Meeting in Handwara**

"People have yearned for indigenous leadership to represent their voices in Parliament"

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Peoples Conference President Sajad Lone chaired yet another block-level meeting today, continuing an ongoing series of block meetings in the Handwara Constituency. The meeting was attended by scores of members hailing from Villgam-A, Upper Magam-A, and Drugmulla-A blocks.

The meeting also witnessed the presence of senior party leaders including Abdul Ahad Kashmiri, Ashiq Hussain Sheikh, Waseem Raja, Block President Yaseen Sheikh, Block President Taimoor Shah & Block Secretary Mohammad Ashraf Lone.

The main focus of this significant meeting remained on bolstering a robust connection with the people and encouraging diligent work within their respective areas, along with requisite preparations for the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

In his address, PC President reiterated the party's unwavering commitment to public welfare, asserting its dedication to addressing the issues crucial to improving people's lives.

"The party is dedicated to catalyzing a positive transformation across Jammu and Kashmir, creating opportunities for youth, empowering communities, and fostering an environment conducive to holistic economic growth for all sections of society," he emphasized.

He urged party workers to actively champion the party's development-centric agenda at the grassroots level and educate people about the party's "people-first" policy.

"For a long time, the people of I&K have yearned for an authentic voice from within their midst to genuinely represent their aspirations in the corridors of power. Today, they have entrusted our party leadership with this noble task, as evidenced by the numerous joinings and outpouring of love from the public at large. We are wholeheartedly committed to fulfilling this responsibility," he stated.

The members present at the meeting commended the party's leadership for prioritizing pertinent public issues and pledged to align their efforts with the party's directives under Mr. Lone's guidance.

Court Issues Summon To Facebook Admin In Defamation Plea

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: A local court here has issued a notice to a Facebook admin in a defamation plea filed by a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) "Smile Foundation" for allegedly circulating "malafide videos" against it.

In an order, the court of Munsiff/

SubRegistrarSrinagarAdnanManzoor Naqashbandi, as per GNS, restrained the admin namely Mudasir Bashir, alias Mudasir Aziz, from 'interfering with the affairs of the NGO or uploading any video related to the organization.'

The court also directed admin to remove all the related content



to the case in hand from his Face-

book pages. The admin has also been asked

by the court to respond to the notice by the next date of hearing on March 26.

The plaintiff NGO was represented in the court by advocates Talib Hussain and Seerat Mehraj.

According to the plea, Mudasir has been "managing" multiple Facebook pages with the names 'Kashmir Youth Power', 'News Express', 'Mission Kashmir' and Mudasir Aziz' and "masquerading as a journalist to defame people and settle personal grudges".

J&K Govt Appoints Ombudsman To Keep A Check On **Discrimination Against HIV Infected Persons**

SRINAGAR. MAR 20: In Control) Act 2017.

a significant move, the Jammu&KashmirGovernment has appointed an ombudsman to whom people infected with HIV can complain about discrimination faced by them.

The Health & Medical Education Department has appointed Sham Lal Lalhal, retired district and sessions judge, as ombudsman to address complaints of discrimination under the **Human Immunodeficiency** Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Act 2017.

According to a notification issued by the department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Sham Lal Lahal has been appointed as ombdusman for a period of three years or till he attains the age of 70, whichever is

earlier. The appointment has been made under the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and

Under the law, every state and UT shall appoint an ombudsman, who is empowered to inquire into the complaints of discrimination against HIV infected persons and providing of

healthcare services to them. As per the Act, the ombudsman shall submit a report to the state/UT governmentevery six months stating the number and nature of complaints received, the actions taken and orders passed. There is also a provision of penalty of Rs 10,000 if theombudsman's order is not complied with.

Jailed AIP leader Engineer Rasheed to contest LS polls from Baramulla

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: The Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) has decided to field incarcerated leader

Abdul Rasheed Sheikh aka Engineer Rasheed in the Lok Sabha elections from Baramulla Lok Sab-

ha seat.

The spokesperson of the AIP Firdous Baba Wednesday said the decision to field Engineer Rasheed from north Kashmir's Baramulla Lok Sabha seat was taken by the Political Affairs Committee (PAC).

"We are hopeful that he will be released from jail before the elections," Baba said. " Our constitution allows jailed persons to contest elections."

Rasheed, a two-term MLA from north Kashmir's Langate, is currently lodged in Delhi's Tihar jail . He was arrested in 2019 by National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a terror funding

In 2008, Rasheed, a civil engineer from remote Mawar village in Handwara lakh votes. (UNI)

, won the Langate Assembly seat. Before becoming a law maker, he was known in the area for his struggle for civil liberties.

Rasheed was a close confidante of slain separatist leader, Abdul Gani Lone the founder of Peoples Con-

In the last Parliamentary polls in Baramulla Lok Sabha, Rasheed, who contested as an independent candidate gave a biggest surprise as he won over a

New Delhi using full might to defeat NC: Omar Abdullah

Iammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday alleged that New Delhi "is using its full might" to defeat the National Conference in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls.

Omar said his party was fully geared up for the elections and to meet all the challenges.

"None of the elections are easy.

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: Former This time Delhi is using its full might to defeat the National Conference in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls. In previous elections, guns were used and the biggest target of the militancy was NC. We fought the past elections in a very tough situation. ... Be it 1996 or in 1998-99, when I fought the parliament elections there was a strong boycott call", Omar told

On the possible pre-poll alliance between Altaf Bukhari's Apni Party and Ghulam Nabi Azad-led Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), Omar said it is not the first time that people of J&K will see this kind of situation when all joined to defeat

Omar referred to the 1977 elections when Jammu and Kashmir had a similar kind of situation.

reporters here. **Choudhary Lal Singh Joins Congress Party At AICC Headquarters In New Delhi**

Set to contest on Undhampur-Doda seat, asks party workers to get united to win the battle

JAMMU, MAR 20: Former Minister and President of Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan Choudhary Lal Singh today joined Congress party at All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters in New Delhi and is all set to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Udhampur-Doda Parliamentary constituency.

He was welcomed in the party by AICC Chief Spokesman Pawan Khera, AICC General Secretary and J&K Incharge Bharatsin Soalnki, PCC President Vikar Rasool Wani, co-incharge J&K Manoj Yadav, NSUI national president Neeraj Kundan and others.

After joining Congress party, Choudhary Lal Singh asked the party leaders and workers to get united to win these elections. "Whenever I have contested any elections, my party has formed the government. I don't know

how but I think it comes straight away from heavens," he said while addressing media after the joining, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

"In 2002, our party formed the government in Jammu and Kashmir when I had won the Assembly elections. After that, when BJP had given the slogan of shining India in 2004, I won Lok Sabha elections and the Congress party formed the government at the centre. Everybody should keep this in mind and in advance we all should be united," Singh said, in his own style.

Lal Singh said that fighting elections in Jammu and Kashmir is a tough job and he knows it very well. "I have faced three deadly attacks but escaped unhurt. I know how tough it is to fight elections in J&K and you all should respect us," he added.

He expressed his displeasure on changing his candidature during 2014 Lok Sabha elections when party had given the mandate to Ghulam Nabi Azad (who lost to Dr. Jitendra Singh of BJP). "You all were witness to that and even cried," he added.

Preferring Azad over Singh during 2014 elections became the reason for him to leave the grand-old party and he jumped the ship and joined BJP. He successfully contested the 2014 Assembly elections in J&K and became the minister in PDP-BJP coalition government.

Thanking Congress party, Lal singh said that the future belongs to young people and the all the old people will die. "Rahul Gandhi is young and he will surely become the Prime Minister of the country. Whenever I see these young people around (pointing towards Neeraj Kundan and Shanawaz Choudhary), I tell them you are the future," he added.

Welcoming him into the party fold, PCC President Vikar Rasool Wani said that Choudhary Lal Singh has always worked for the downtrodden and poor people and has emerged a strong leader. "His joining is a welcome step and we welcome him," he added.

The two-time Member Parliament(MP)from Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat, Singh's joining Congress party will give a huge boost to the grand-old party from this seat where Minister of State (MoS) in Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Dr. Jitendra Singh is contesting on BJP's ticket.

Choudhary Lal Singh's candidate will make this contest on Udhampur-Doda seat interesting

as Singh has his own base in his home district Kathua and Congress party enjoys good reputation in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts of this constituency. With his entry, there will be a direct contest between Choudhary Lal Singh and Jitendra Singh whereas Democratic Progress Azad Party's (DPAP) candidate and former MLA from Inderwal Ghulam Muhammad Saroori will play a major role as being a native of Kishtwra district, he is expected to get votes from Chenab valley.

Jitendra Singh is also a twotime MP from this seat and is considered a close aide of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He will be facing a strong heat as the contest will be tough. This seat is all set to go for polls in first phase on April 19 and the counting of votes will be on June 4.

Kargil observes shutdown over statehood, Sixth schedule demand

SRINAGAR, MAR 20: The Kargil district of Ladakh observed a half-day strike on Wednesday to press for demands of statehood and implementation of the Sixth schedule.

While the business establishments remained closed across Kargil, a protest demonstration was also held by the residents in support of their demands.

In several videos on social media, the protesters in Kargil were seen shouting slogans 'Save Ladakh, Restore Democracy' and 'Ladakh wants Statehood and Sixth Schedule'. The call for the shutdown was given by Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), which is leading a joint fight with Apex Body of Leh (ABL) for constitutional safeguards for Ladakh.

The protesters in Kargil also expressed solidarity with Ladakh's climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who has been on a fast in Leh for over two weeks in support of statehood and implementation of the Sixth schedule of the Constitution in Ladakh.

On Day 15 of his hunger strike, Wangchuk in a post on X said, "I am still fine surviving on just water & salts. Along with me 125 people slept hungry outdoors under clear skies. Temperature: minus 11 degree Celsius.LetusunderstandthatsavingLadakh'sglaciers is not just a concern for the people of Ladakh alone..."

Meanwhile, CPI(M) leader Mohamad Yousuf Tarigami on Wednesday urged the central government to heed the voices and address the grievances of people of Ladakah, who are seeking constitutional safeguards.

He said that people in Jammu and Kashmir stand in solidarity with Ladakh. In a statement, Tarigami said they never desired for Ladakh to be separated from the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Yet, it happened abruptly against our wishes. While a faction of society in Leh were demanding Union Territory status for Ladakh and celebrated it later, they now acknowledge the drawbacks and express a preference for constitutional guarantees for their empowerment," the CPI(M) leader said.

HT - NEWS

DEO Pulwama chairs meeting with representatives of Political Parties

@HEADLINESTODA17

Urges all political parties to abide by the electoral code of conduct

HT News Network

LE HEADLINES

PULWAMA, MARCH 20: The District Election Officer (DEO) Pulwama. Dr. Basharat Qayoom chaired a meeting with representatives of various political parties at the District Election Office premises, here.

The meeting was aimed to foster dialogue and adherence to MCC guidelines and cooperation among political stakeholders in the lead-up to the upcoming elections.

The DEO emphasized the impor-

tance of ensuring a fair, transparent and inclusive electoral process that upholds the democratic principles.

During the meeting, key topics including Model Code of Conduct, Role of Political Parties in different stages of electoral process and adherence to Guidelines and Directives of ECI were discussed. The political parties were encouraged to actively engage through presentations by State Level Master Trainer.

Dr. Basharat reiterated the Election Commission's commitment to conducting free and fair elections and



urged all political parties to abide by the electoral code of conduct. He emphasized the need for mutual respect, cooperation and adherence to democratic norms throughout the electoral process.

The representatives from the political parties expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue and pledged their commitment for ensuring smooth electoral process in Pulwama district.

The DEO concluded the meeting by reaffirming the Election Commission's dedication to facilitating a transparent and credible electoral process. He urged all political parties to work collaboratively towards achieving the common goal of upholding the integrity of the democratic process. The meeting was attended byNodal Officer MCC (ADC), AROs and Dy DEO. The representatives from the political parties expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue and pledged their commitment for ensuring smooth electoral process in Pulwama district.

عنوان درخواست بشير احمد ملك ولدغلام مجمد ملك ساكندلاري يوره پهلگا منسبت اجرائی لیگل ہیر (وارث جایز) سرٹیفیکٹ

اشتهار بمراد آگاهی ماملهمندر جبالصدرمیں درخواست سائل کی بیٹی ثافی جان دختر دختر بشراحمد نا ما مدور بنده محدوری در دراست سائل 2023/11 ملک مورخه خوابال ہے کہا تکے حق میں کینگل ہیر سرٹیٹیکٹ اجراء کی جا * بروے رپورٹ چواری علقه متوفی محمیه بزیل

> 1...بشيراحمد ولدغلام محمد . 48 سال 2 شميمه بانوزوجه بشيراحمد 44 سال 3....شاہدا حمد 22 سال ڈیور

4... یاوراحمد 18 سال اس طور کنبه کل (4) افراد پر مشتل ہے اس کے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کنبہ ہیں بتلا یا گیا ہے سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کئی شخص بااشخاص، کوکوئ عدر یااعتراُ اَصْ مِهوه وا پناعرر یااعتراض ساتھ یو مکے اندر پیش کرے معاد گزر نے کے بعد کو ئ عزر یااعتراض قبول نیں ہوگا

درخواست منجانب سائله سيرت منظور دختر مظور احمد واني سائحنه بنگوٹ پہلگام بمرادحصول RBA سرٹھیکیٹ

معامله مندر چه عنوان ممین درخواست سائله دفتر پذامین زیر کاروائی ہے اس نبت پواری سلقه سے رپورٹ بیثمول مطوبه نقوالات ریکار والی ہے کی سے عیال ہوتا ہے سائل موضع سائلہ بنگوٹ پہلگا ممین رہائش پزیرہے. بذیل افراد مشتل ہے

1. بشير احمد واني 55 سال ,زمينداري مهانهآمدني 60002. 2.رفیقه بانو زوجه بشیر احمد وانی 48سال گهریلوکام

3... ياوربشير پسر 27سال سال فيلر آمداني. 70004... مينوبشير دختر 24 ال

5....ىجاداحمد پسر //فوٹو گرافر

6...جميلهاختر اچې 45سال اسكےعلاوه كوئى بھى افرادنيں بتلايا گياہے سائل كى سالإنه آمدانى 105600 تک ہے سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرء کرنے میں اگر کئی شخص بااشخاص کوعزریا اعتراض ہوتووہ اپناعزریااعتراض ساتھ دن کےاندراندر پیش کریںمعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عزریااعتراض قابل قبول نیں ہوگا

نائبتحصيلدار

درخواست منجانب سائل سجاد الحمد وانى ولد بشير احمد وانى سائله لدرو پېلگام بمراد حصول RBA سرٌفيکيپ

اشتهار بمراد آگاهی معامله مندر جه عنوان میں درخواست سائل دفتر بذامیں زیرکاروائی ہے اِس نبت پٹواری علقہ سے رپورٹ بیٹمول مطلوبہ نقوالات ریکاروای ہے اس نبت پٹواری علقہ سے رپورٹ بیٹمول مطلوبہ نقوالات ریکار ڈطلب کے گ جس سے عیال ہوتا ہے سائل موضع سائل لدرو پہلاگا میں رہائش پزیر ہے. بذیل افرادشتمل ہے

1.. محمدرمضان وانی ولد عبدالله وانی 73سال مردوری 2...منظوراحمد وانی ولد محدر مضان وانی 43 سال د کانداری

 تبلیمه زوجه منظوراحمد 40سال گهریلوکام 4... سيرت منظور دختر منظوراحمد 15 سال زير تعليم

5...مصیب پسر 12 سال اسکےعلاو ہو کی بھی افراد نیں بتلایا گیاہے سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجرء کرنے میں اگر کئی شخص یااشخاص کوعور یااعتراض ہوتو و واپناعزر یااعتراضِ ساتھ دن

ے اندراندر پیش کریں معاد گزرنے کے بعد توئی عور یااعتراض قابل کے اندراندر پیش کریں معاد گزرنے کے بعد توئی عور یااعتراض قابل قبول نیں ہو گا

نائب تحصيلداريهلگام

Lok Sabha Elections-2024: **Training imparted to Sector Officers at Kupwara**

HT News Network



KUPWARA, MARCH 20: The District Election Office Kupwara organized a training session for the Sectoral Officers in the conference Hall of DC Office Complex, here. The training was imparted by Nodal Officer Elections/ National Level Master Trainer (NLMT), Sameer Jan. NLMT briefed the Sector Officers thoroughly about the responsibilities during the forthcoming election and urged them to put forth every effort to make Lok Sabha elections smooth and successful.

The Sector Officers were acquainted with essential skills and knowledge to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process. Participants actively engaged in interactive sessions and practical demonstrations to enhance their understanding and proficiency in handling diverse scenarios. Training session was attended by the Deputy District Election Officer (Dy. DEO), Hamidullah Mir, NT Election, Sector Officers (Election).

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Stray Dog Rampage in Handwara Leaves 20 Injured, Sparks Fear in Residents

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

Handwara, Mar, 19: A series of stray dog attacks in Handwara, located in North Kashmir's Kupwara district, has left at least two dozen people injured over the past three days, including women. According to officials quoted by HEAD-LINES TODAY, one victim is critically injured and has been referred to Srinagar hospital for further treatment, while the others are receiving medical attention at the district hospital in Handwara.Locals reported



witnessing the dog near the gate of the Handwara police station, where it viciously attacked a man,

causing serious injuries. This marks the fourth incident of such attacks in the area. Earlier occurrences

on Saturday and Monday resulted in around two dozen people being injured, instilling a sense of fear and terror among the residents of Handwara. The escalating danger has prompted school-going children and students to halt their routine movements to school and markets. Concerned citizens are appealing to the authorities to take immediate action to either capture or eliminate the aggressive stray dog, citing the urgent need to ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

2-Day Orientation program on School Safety & Security concludes at Baramulla

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 20: In a significant step towards improving school safety and security, a twoday orientation program organized by the School Education Department, Baramulla concluded today.During the programme, 40 teachers from different government schools across 18 zones in Baramulla District underwent training as master trainers, who will subsequently train about 1800 teachers as Safety Council-

ors and First Responders in

their zones.The programme was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, and was attended by the Chief Education Officer Baramulla, Balbir Singh Raina, along with teachers from various schools across the district.

The training featured a specialized team from State Disaster Response Fund, Health, and Red Cross, who demonstrated safety preparedness strategies during emergencies to the participating teachers.The training also encompassed informative

sessions led by experts on a range of topics concerning school safety and security. These included discussions on child safety measures, cybercrimes, insights into the POCSO Act and other key aspects to ensure school safety and security. Speaking during the

program, the DC emphasized the need to raise awareness among students and all stakeholders about the importance of school safety and to create schoolwide safety plans.While distributing the certificates among the teachers who completed the training, the DC underscored the important role they will play in ensuring a conducive learning environment for students by identifying and addressing any safety and security issues that may arise. Speaking during the program, the DC emphasized the need to raise awareness among students and all stakeholders about the importance of school safety and to create schoolwide safety plans.While distributing the certificates among the teachers who completed the training, the DC underscored the important role they will play.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name in passport has been written as MUNIERA BANO WANI bearing passport No k1429337 while my correct name is MU-NIERA BANO which needs to be changed. if anybody has any objection in this regard he /she may file his/her objection in the PASS PORT OFFICE SRINAGER within a period of seven days from the date publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

> NAME....MUNIERA BANO **R/O...NOWSHARRA ANANTNAG**

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has bevelopment Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of INAM -UL-HAQ NAJAR D/O MOHAMMAD ASHRAF NAJAR R/O BANDI PAYEEN Tehsil wagoora Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 07/03/2022 and event has been shown to be occured at SDH kreeri for issuance of delay order. In this connection. if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

> **EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS KREERI**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Aazim Rashid S/o, Abdul Rashid Dar resident of Haiin would

like to inform all that I submit an application form for my DOB certificate under as 23.11.2022 in the Tehsil office of Handwara. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/ she may contact the Tehsildar office Handwara within the period of seven days, after that no objection will be entertained.

> **AAZIM RASHID** S/O, ABDUL RASHID DAR

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR BIRTHS & DEATHS BLOCK WAGOORA Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This office is in receipt of representation HAFSA W/o SUHAIL AHMAD TRUMBOO R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI District Baramulla for issuance of Birth Certificate in favour of MY DAUGHTER namely HANEEFA TRUMBOO D /O SUAIL AH-MAD TRUMBOO R/O KREERI D.O.B as per documents is 10/05/2014 bearing registration no 577/15-A/PSK /16 & date of issue 09/11/2016 & date of registration 08/12/2016 event shown to be occurred at home In this connection if anyone have any objection in the registration of birth certificate shall present his/her claim to this office or Tehsildar Kreeri/Wagoora/BDO office Wagoora within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

REGISTRATION BIRTH & DEATH

(BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICE WAGOORA)





General Elections-2024 RO 4-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency issues election notification

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, MARCH 20: Returning Officer 4-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency, Dr. Rakesh Minhas, today issued election notification for the upcoming Parliamentary Elections in the constituency.The elections in this Parliamentary Constituency (PC) are scheduled to take place during the first phase of the electoral process.

The Election Notification specifies the timeline and procedures for candidates wishing to contest in the parliamentary elections.

As per the notification, nomination papers can be filed by candidates or their proposers at the Returning



Returning Officer 67-Kathua AC (ACR Kathua) at Deputy Commissioner's office, Kathua between 11:00 AM to 03:00 PM on any day (other than public holiday) not later than March 27, 2024.

The nomination forms can be obtained from the office of the Returning Officer, located at the Deputy Polling will be conducted from 07:00 AM to 06:00 Later, in a Press Confer-

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ence addressed in this regard, the Returning Officer 4-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency informed that there will be no nomination process on March 23rd, 24th and 25th, 2024, due to public holidays on these dates under Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881.

gible candidates and stakeholders to adhere to the election schedule and procedures outlined in the Election Notification. He also appealed for active participation and cooperation of all concerned parties to ensure a fair and transparent election.

Dr. Minhas urged all eli-

Also chairs meeting with Bankers for coordination in expenditure monitoring **■** HT News Network

BUDGAM, MARCH 20: The District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo today chaired a meeting with representatives of the recognised political parties.

At the outset, the representatives of political parties were sensitized regarding the strict adherence to Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during the upcoming Lok-Sabha 2024 elections in the district.

The DEO emphasized that all guidelines of Election Commission of India (ECI), shall be implemented and followed in letter and spirit in the district.

He urged political parties



DEO Budgam sensitises recognised political parties

regarding Model Code of Conduct Guidelines

to ensure that ECI's guidelines on Model Code of Conduct for Political Parties are complied with.

He also urged political parties to give their cooperation to the district administration for conduct of free, fair and smooth elections in the district.

The DEO said that the

district administration is committed to implementing the ECI's guidelines in letter and spirit and to ensure strict implementa-

tion of MCC. He also informed that a dedicated Media Centre and the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee facility has also been established at District Information Centre Budgam.

Meanwhile, Additional District Development Commissioner Budgam, Nodal Officer, MCC also briefed the political parties regarding the MCC and urged them to follow all guidelines in letter and spirit.

Later, the DEO also chaired meeting of Bank Heads and instructed them to facilitate candidates smooth opening of bank accounts and issuance of cheque books as per the ECI guidelines

The bank heads were alsosensitized about the guidelines of ECI on reporting of suspicious bank transactions and reporting same to the concerned agencies.

DEO Bandipora notifies Toll Free No 1950, for the public to register complaints of MCC Violations

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MARCH 20: District Election Officer (Deputy Commissioner) Bandipora, Shakeel-ur-Rehman on Wednesday asked the political parties and contesting candidates to desist from intimidating or bribing the voters and urged them to strictly follow the Model Code of Conduct. Through a general public notice, DEO brought to the notice of General Public, Contesting Candidates and Political parties that violation(s) of Mode Code of Conduct including public intimidation, threats, influences and bribery of electors like distribution of cash/ liquor etc., are offence(s) under section 171B IPC and corrupt practices under section 123 of Representation of People Act, 1951. The DEO informed the general public that Complaint(s), if any, in case of such violations, can be lodged with the Complaint Monitoring Cell established in office of the District Election Officer, Bandipora on Toll Free No 1950 or Complaint Monitoring Centre Mini Secretariat Bandipora on 01957-225322. Besides, c-VIG-IL mobile App can also be downloaded to register such complaints through online mode..Through a general public notice, DEO brought to the notice of General Public, Contesting Candidates and Political parties that violation(s) of Mode Code of Conduct including public intimidation, threats, influences and bribery of electors like distribution of cash/liquor etc., are offence(s) under $section\,171B\,IPC\,and\,corrupt\,practices\,under\,section\,123$ of Representation of People Act, 1951. The DEO informed the general public that Complaint(s), if any, in case of such violations, can be lodged with the Complaint Monitoring.

Meeting of Election Expenditure Monitoring Teams held at Ganderbal

HT News Network

nomination papers will

take place on March 28,

2024 at 01:00 PM at Depu-

ty Commissioner's Office

Kathua.Candidates have

the option to withdraw

their candidature on March

The polling day for the

constituency is scheduled

for April 19, 2024, and the

30, 2024 until 03:00 PM.

GANDERBAL, MARCH 20: In a concerted effort to ensure transparency and fairness in the electoral process, the Deputy District Election Officer (Dy. DEO) Ganderbal, Abid Iqbal Malik along with the Election Expenditure Monitoring Teams, convened a pivotal meeting at the District Treasury Officer's office, here today.

The meeting brought together a dedicated group of officials tasked with overseeing and monitoring election expenditure.

With the upcoming elections looming on the horizon, the discussions were centered on enhancing the efficacy of monitoring mechanisms and fostering collaboration among the teams to uphold the integrity of the electoral process.

During the meeting, the Dy.DEO underscored the paramount importance of adhering to stringent guidelines and protocols to curb any potential malpractices related to election

Emphasizing the significance of their role in maintaining a level play-



ing field for all candidates, the Dy. DEO urged the teams to exercise diligence and impartiality in their

Furthermore, strategies for leveraging technology and data analytics to streamline monitoring efforts were deliberated upon, with a focus on leveraging innovative tools to identify and address discrepancies

In adherence to the Election Com-

mission's directives, the meeting concluded with a renewed resolve to uphold the democratic values and principles enshrined in the electoral process, thereby ensuring a level playing field for all stakeholders involved.

The Meeting was attended by Assistant Expenditure Observers for both the ACs of District Ganderbal, members of Accounting Teams, and Expenditure Monitoring Cell.

Rohmoo Pulwama residents demand fire service station

■ HT News Network

Pulwama, Mar 20 (KNO): The residents of Rohmoo area in Rajpora hamlet of South Kashmir's Pulwama district here have demanded a fire service station in their locality. The residents of the area told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that there are around 20-25 $villages\,around\,Rohmoo, having\,a\,population\,in\,thousands$ but the area is yet to get a basic facility of fire service station. The residents said that the nearest fire station for them is at Pulwama, which is around 10 KM from the town and at the time of any fire incident, they have to wait for hours for the fire tenders to reach the spot. "By the time the fire service vehicle reaches Rohmoo and its adjacent areas, property worth lakhs gets damaged as it takes around one hour for fire tenders to reach the spot,' Qayoom Khan, a local social activist said. He said that the people of Rohmoo had approached successive governments for setting up a fire service station at Rohmoo, but to no avail. Mudasir Ahmad, another local resident said that fire incidents are increasing and there is a dire need for a fire service station in the area that will cater to around one dozen adjacent villages. He said locals have been continuously raising this issue at every platform but there is no positive response from the government as of now, adding that hundreds of villages are dependent on fire service station Pulwama and it is not possible for them to cater hundreds of villages at some time fire incidents can take place at multiple locations simultaneously. The residents said that during recent years they had lost property worth crores due to the lack of a fire service station in their area, adding that even last year, some fire incidents have taken place in the area, which could have been controlled on time.

Northern railway slashes ticket prices for Kashmir, restores pre-COVID fares

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 20 (KNO): In a major relief to train commuters, Northern Railways has reduced ticket fares to pre-COVID times in the Kashmir valley, officials said on Wednesday.

A top railway official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that railways reinstated Second Class Ordinary Fares on passenger trains in Kashmir. "The fare charges have been dropped by nearly 40-50%, reverting to pre-COVID levels," he said, adding that previously, the ticket fare was Rs 35 from Sadura station to Srinagar, now it has been reduced to Rs 15. He further said that there are system errors occurring at various locations, they implementing rate reductions across all stations—(KNO)

Man found dead under mysterious conditions in Sopore, family alleges murder

HT News Network

Sopore, Mar 20 (KNO): A family here in north Kashmir's Sopore alleged murder of their beloved son after his body was recovered under mysterious conditions from the orchards while the Police have started investigation into

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a body has been recovered under mysterious conditions from Duroo orchards, and was subsequently taken to Sub District Hospital, Sopore.

Following the legal-medico formalities, the body was handed over to the family for the last rites, officials said, adding that the investigations related to the incident are going on in full swing.

The deceased was identified as Mushtaq Ahmed Mir son of Ghulam Rasool Mir of Duroo Sopore.

Mir, who has left behind five children, three daughters and two sons, went missing in the evening hours and subsequently police were informed following which the search operation was launched, said the deceased's brother Mohammed Rafi.

Election Training for Zonal, Sector Magistrates held at Bandipora

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MARCH 20: In preparation for the upcoming Lok sabha elections, a training programme was today conducted for Zonal and Sector Magistrates of 15-Bandipora Assembly Constituency at Mini Secretariat,

The training programme was presided over by District Election Officer Shakeel ul Rehman and was attended by ARO/ACR Shabir Ahmad Wani, GM DIC, Zonal and Sector Magistrates of 15-Bandipora assembly constituency and



other concerned. The training was aimed to equip zonal and sector magistrates with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the smooth conduct of electoral processes and uphold the integrity of elections.

The zonal/sectoral Magistrates were briefed on their roles and responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of maintaining impartiality in carrying out duties for conducting peaceful and smooth elections.

On the occasion, DEO emphasized proper training of zonal and sector Magistrates and asked ARO 15-Bandiporato take review from zonal and sector magistrates weekly besides directing the Zonal and Sector Magistrates to ensure assured minimum facility and all other necessary facilities at polling stations.

JKEDI trains 124 aspirants under SANKALP at Ramban

HT News Network

Jammu, Mar 20 (KNS): Three Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) of the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute under under SANKALP successfully con-

cluded today in Ramban district. The three programs were conducted at Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) of Banihal and Ramban and Government Higher Secondary School, Batote in which 124 entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs have been successfully trained. The entrepreneurs were exposed to a comprehensive 5-day training course under Entrepre-

neurship Development Program (EDP) equipping them with the know-how of running a profitable business, managerial skills and knowledge for successfully establishing and running their livelihood generating ventures. SANK-ALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness and Livelihood Promotions), is a programme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, GoI with loan assistance from the World Bank.The EDPs were inaugurated by Director JKEDI, Rajinder Sharma (JKAS) on March 14. The aspirants have chosen Dairy farming, Mushroom Farming, establishment of small business ventures like Boutiques.

SAKSHAM J&K Vice President Visits Basti Area Of Bhadarwah Focusses On Inclusive Movement For Welfare Of PWDs

Amir Iqbal Khan

Bhadarwah, March 20: Vice President SAKSHAM NGO Ajit Singh Kotwal today visited Basti area of Panchayat Nalthi of Additional District Bhadarwah where he interacted with the public and presented the points of the aims and objectives of the organisation.

A press release in this regard stated that Kotwal had an elaborate meeting with the senior citizens particularly Differently Abled Persons and made them aware about the statutory rights they have in the constitution of the country that confers special privileges for their inclusivity, overall welfare and development. The release said that the participants were informed that SAKSHAM Bharat Organisation is specifically acting as a bridge between the general public and the governmental agencies which encompasses the purpose of spreading mass awareness amongst the public especially physically challenged persons in the society. "The main aim of this organisation is to rope in maximum population of persons



with disabilities to avail different benefits Govt has provided for them including education, ease full right of casting votes during elections and taking benefit of various welfare schemes of the govt at par with the other population," Kotwal said. He further added, "Facilities like locomotive aids, tricycles, Awaas Yojna and 75% concession in rail fares are important aspects for cover-

ing physically challenged population". He further added that PWDs will avail themselves of the opportunities during upcoming Lok Sabha elections in which they they have been given the right to cast their votes from the comfort of their homes while adhering to the guidelines set by the election commission of India setting aside the need to visit polling stations. The locals on this occasion expressed satisfaction on the way the organisation is working relentlessly for the welfare of the people(PWDs) and assured all sorts of cooperation with the NGO's nationwide mission to create a more equitable society for all individuals regardless of ability."The exchange of knowledge and goodwill during my visit underscores the importance of community engagement in driving positive change. By continuing to work together and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities, we can build a society where every individual has the opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully," he clarified adding SAKSHAM remains steadfast in its mission and with the support of communities, we are confident in our endeavour to create a more inclusive and accessible.



EDITORIAL

JKBOSE's Disastrous Blunder

The recent debacle orchestrated by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) has left hundreds of 12th standard students in a state of utter dismay and uncertainty. On Wednesday, instead of receiving the appropriate question papers for their 12th standard examinations, students were handed the question papers meant for the 11th standard. This egregious error not only reflects the incompetence of the board but also exposes the callous attitude towards the academic future of these students.

This mishap has disrupted the examination process and caused inconvenience to both students and educators resulting in postponing of the examination. The formation of a two-member committee by the School Education Department to investigate this issue is a necessary step towards understanding the circumstances that led to this error and ensuring accountability. Such incidents highlight the importance of robust systems and protocols in place to prevent such occurrences in the future, safeguarding the integrity and reliability of the examination process.

For students diligently preparing for their 12th standard examinations, this turn of events is nothing short of a nightmare. The confusion and distress caused by being presented with the wrong question paper on the day of the examination are immeasurable. These students, already grappling with the pressures of academic performance, now find themselves navigating through an unnecessary obstacle course created by the very institution entrusted with ensuring fair and smooth conduct of examinations.

The implications of this error extend far beyond mere inconvenience. It erodes the trust that students and parents place in the education system, casting doubt on the reliability and credibility of examination processes. Moreover, it raises serious questions about the preparedness and diligence of the authorities responsible for overseeing such crucial tasks.

SED constituting a two-member committee to investigate the matter, while a step in the right direction, is woefully inadequate given the gravity of the situation. It is imperative that accountability is established, and swift action is taken to rectify the damage caused to the affected students.

The recent fiasco perpetrated by JKBOSE underscores the urgent need for systemic reforms and a more conscientious approach towards the welfare of students. The board must prioritize transparency, efficiency, and integrity to prevent such egregious errors from recurring in the future and restore faith in the education system. Anything less would be a disservice to the aspirations and aspirations of the students whose futures hang in the balance.

Newspaper Reading Is The Best Way To Enhance Your Vocabulary



■ Sahil Manzoor

Knowledge is power. Knowledge accumulates, and it needs patience, curiosity, guidance, etc. One thing is very fortunate: we have a good number of sources that provide us with updated, compatible materials that help us and keep us updated. There are great minds involved in journalism and brilliant editors who are working together and providing us with what is happening around us.

It has been centuries since the first newspaper was printed in the year 1605. In India, the first newspaper was published in 1779 by James Augustus. There are famous and leading newspapers in the world today, and there are a number of other leading newspapers that are also published on a daily basis in different countries around the globe. Newspaper reading sums up new words in our vocabulary and provides us with current general knowledge of our surroundings.

Today, everyone should have a gallery of knowledge to tackle the hard situations in day-to-day life. Every individual needs to be capable of facing different kinds of hardship and achieving success in life. Today's world is fully laced with advanced technology, and the world needs people who are technical, energetic, active, and have good communication skills to deal with their clients properly and in a very humble and kind way.

Language is just a medium through which we can communicate with each other and express our ideas, thoughts, etc., but at the same time, we are living in an advanced place where we must have the skills, motivation, and good communication skills. One should have a gallery of knowledge to express his thoughts to the outside world.

During vacations, there are several coaching institutes offering coaching for English-speaking courses and per-



sonality development training to learn more languages for the goal of employment. Nowadays, competency levels are very high among learners and jobseeking youths, but at the same time, we lack so many things that education is mandatory to get a reputed job and handsome earnings. Being educated enhances your morale, develops your personality, and enhances your level of dignity.

There are so many other sources that we should utilizes to develop our overall personality. Time is not far when we get a revolution for our nation, and nations develop when youth come out with full zeal and enthusiasm, accumulating dreams for the nation and their dreamer. When we start to develop our thoughts, have big goals, and come forward with eminent dreams, no one can beat us.

In today's article, I am going to explore the benefits of newspaper reading and how it helps us get educated unintentionally. These days, social media plays a lofty role in bringing good things out, but at the same

time, in society, there is a negative perspective on social media as well. Due to the influence of social media, most of us are taking part in different physical activities, which are very beneficial for us and for our strong thoughts.

Several Android apps display happenings on your mobile phone within a very limited time, and Google plays a vital role in keeping you updated in day-to-day life, but newspapers are quite a different learning medium for the learners and for the people who are living in our society. Newspaper reading helps us learn a new word with proper pronunciation, provides us with a gallery of knowledge within a very short period, and sums up new words in our vocabulary, keeping us updated.

Newspaper reading helps us to know what is happening throughout the world, country, and state and even provides us with the whole day's happenings. Newspaper reading provides us with general knowledge and awareness about the latest updates and provides information on weather, national highways, job advertisements, and renowned places to visit. Newspaper reading allows us to know what is happening in the country. The position of the share market presents the situation of the country's economy. Most importantly, newspaper reading enhances our vocabulary as new words are being used by the editors in the news column. Trending words are too often used in the newspapers. There are some other interesting facts also published in the newspapers; they include poetry, recipes, advertisements, religious facts, jokes, and so on.

Newspapers are published in our country in many languages, like English, Urdu, Hindi, etc. The readers are enjoying their favorite columns, so get them updated. Acquiring the latest facts. Knowing what is happening in the country and the world. So if you want to update your knowledge and get more knowledge, newspaper reading is the best way to get all of it, and it is free of charge.

RAIYAR-ICH, BUDGAM, sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com

Behind Disinterest in Science

Where students of South India give priority to science subjects



■ Vijay Garg

Some time ago, a study revealed that while students of South India give priority to science subjects, students of North India take more interest in arts subjects. According to the study conducted by the Union Ministry of Education, the data received from various state education boards of class 11-12 in the year 2022 shows that in Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, 1.53,2.01 and 2.19 percent students gave importance to arts subjects. Whereas in West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Jharkhand, science subject was the first choice of 13.42, 13.71, 15.63, 18.33 and 22.9 percent students respectively. On the contrary, arts were given priority by 81.5 percent students in Gujarat, 78.94 percent in Bengal, 72.89 percent in Punjab, 76.76 percent in Haryana and 71.23 percent in Rajasthan. Parakh, an associate department of the National Council of Educational Research and Training, i.e. NCERT, analyzes these data to analyze the social, educational and economic implications of these data. A will analyze. But society and educationists also need to consider these

figures. At a time when science and technology are influencing individuals and society at every level and the interference of artificial intelligence is continuously increasing, then the science and arts subjects Why is this ratio worrying? This discrepancy also reflects the fact that what is the root cause of shortage of scientists in India and why the pace of increase in the number of patents in the field of original invention has been slow, encourage the field of scienceDespite many efforts of the government, there is a shortage of scientists in almost all the top institutions of the country. At present, the posts of 3200 scientists are vacant in seventy major research institutes of the country. The maximum number of 177 posts are vacant in the institutes associated with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Bengaluru. The posts of 123 scientists are vacant in the National Chemical Laboratory of Pune. This is the situation in these institutions of the country when the government has started many attractive schemes to fill the posts. For research in theseThere is also provision of facilities. Besides, scientists working abroad are being given attractive salary and allowances offers upon returning home. Despite this, neither the students are developing interest in becoming scientists nor has the process of return of scientists from abroad started. In the background of this, on the one hand, there is no confidence among the scientists that the proposals being made will be sustained; second, the tendency of the bureaucracy to create obstructions in the functioning is also becoming an obstacle in creating confidence.Is. In the current scenario, any country can

become strong and capable only through scientific achievements. These achievements also keep human life pleasant and prosperous. India is full of young talents or educated unemployed, yet the number of youth becoming scientists or taking interest in fundamental research is less. One of the main reasons for this is that we are not able to make scientists ideal like players, actors, bureaucrats and politicians. At many levels, sports are given more importance than science. not getting atten $tion This \, is \, a \, major \, reason \, for \, the \, migration \,$ of scientific talents. Obviously, we need to create such an environment which becomes synonymous with fundamental research and research culture. For this, we will have to give importance to those people who are engaged in inventions on the basis of their indigenous knowledge, but due to lack of academic knowledge, their inventions do not get scientific recognition. In fact, here we have the government dominating the field of science and technology, hence it lacks the will to take risks. Whereas, scientific researchThe foundation rests on imagination and transparency, which cannot be achieved without taking risks. Today, in the era of globalization, research and development in the field of science $and\, technology\, is\, very\, important.\, But\, the$ other sad aspect of the liberal economy is that our high-class science education institutions are not able to attract talent. Most of our talents either migrate abroad. Or join private banks, insurance companies or other management institutions by doing MBA with engineering. Are. That is, talented people who have acquired basic education are forced to work in the opposite work culture. Isn't this contradictory

work culture a betrayal of talent? There was a time when there was shortage of funds in science institutions. But now these institutions are no longer short of funds and resources. Despite this, if the youth are shying away from science, then there may be something lacking in our scientific work culture. The research being done today has a tendency to repeat the work done in the past. The trend seems to be increasing, which is really worrying. Indian institutions are still searching for a place among the top two hundred universities of the world. It is noteworthy here that in the year 1930, when there was foreign rule in India, there was no scientific research in the country. The infrastructure was non-existent. The literature that gave creativity to thoughts was also inadequate. English education was also in its initial stages, despite this, CV Raman worked with the help of simple indigenous equipment on the basis of indigenous knowledge and language and won the Nobel Prize in Physics for the country. SatyendRa Nath Basu worked with Einstein. Meghnad Saha, Ramanujan, PC Ray and Homi Jahangir Bhabha achieved many achievements. APJ Abdul Kalam and K. Scientists like Shivam have also become great scientists by taking primary education in their mother tongue. Jagadishchandra Basu had surprised the world by discovering life in trees with the equipment made by himself, but now despite all the quality improvements in higher education, it is not possible to achieve such new achievements. We are ahead of the West in the field of science and technology.Can't get rid of dominance. However, India's space missions have

emerged as an exception in this direction, in which indigenous technology is being used. In fact, in the last 75 years, our education system has become a victim of such concepts in which understanding and reasoning are not possible. Instead, the method of cramming has developed. Secondly, instead of making the entire education oriented towards ideas and knowledge, it has been made job or career oriented. In our education system, the teacher's skill of cultivating imaginative ideological sources is also more or lessSh is missing. The pressure of English is also frustrating the natural talents. Is. We need to take a lesson from the countries like America, Russia, China and Japan, from which we are lagging behind in the field of scientific research, that their mother tongues are the medium of science and technical education. There, research and invention work starts at the university level itself. If a person with non-academic education materializes an invention, his achievement is immediately taken over by science research institutions. Whereas here we have There is a lack of work culture to encourage or recognize the work. Unless an environment suitable for scientific work culture is created in the country, it is difficult to get ahead in competition with other countries. Besides, our young talents will also not be able to move forward in the direction of becoming scientists. Studies showing disinterest in science subjects are proof of this

> Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist MALOUT punjab

HT - OPED

Awakening Hearts: The Call To Transform Society

"In unity, we find the strength to orchestrate societal renewal"



13TH E ADLINES

Aubaid Ahmad Akhoon

In an era where the youth navigate through the murky waters of aimless wandering, shamelessness, immodesty, and discourtesy, a storm of societal threats looms larger than ever. Fueled by the escalating use of drugs and a business environment in decline, the urgency to confront these negative forces has never been more pressing. The time is now to address these issues comprehensively and avert the impending crisis.

Unmasking the Roots: The spread of social evils forms a complex tapestry, intertwining both internal and external factors within our nation. The collective efforts of individuals at every level have laid bare the roots of this malaise. To combat this multifaceted challenge, concerted action is imperative on both domestic and foreign fronts. It's a rallying call for allparents, educators, religious scholars, mosque leaders, and the entire Muslim community-to take resolute responsibility in every situation.

A Symphony of Vigilance: As the tendrils of societal erosion extend, we find ourselves at a critical juncture where vigilance must be our guiding force. A symphony of collective efforts is essential to counteract these negative elements. Each individual becomes a guardian, standing united against the encroaching darkness.

Revitalizing Moral Fortitude: Amidst the prevalent threats, the reinvigoration of moral fortitude becomes paramount. It's not merely a call to arms; it's a call to revive and reinforce the core values that define our society. It's a collective commitment to instill a sense of purpose and direction among the youth, steering them



away from the pitfalls of aimlessness and substance abuse.

From Homes to Mosques: A Unified Front: The battle against societal threats extends from the intimate confines of homes to the sacred walls of mosques. Parents, the first line of defense, must foster an environment of open communication and moral grounding. Simultaneously, educators and religious scholars must synchronize efforts, becoming beacons of guidance and pillars of strength for the younger generation.

Global Collaboration for Local Impact: Tackling societal erosion requires a global mindset. It's not just a local battle; it's a collective endeavor that transcends borders. Collaboration on the international stage becomes instrumental in curbing the external factors that contribute to the

A Vision Beyond Monetary Pursuits: In the pursuit of a prosperous society, the allure of quick wealth often leads the youth astray. It's time for a paradigm shift—a vision that extends beyond mere monetary pursuits. A society rooted in ethical values, sustainable practices, and a sense of responsibility will inherently deter misguided

Awakening Society from Slumber: As negative elements continue to grow, there's a pressing need to awaken society from its slumber. Activists, officials, and influencers must join forces to raise awareness systematically. It's a clarion call to shake off complacency and stand united against the impending storm.

Bottomline: A Collective Resurgence: In conclusion, the battle against societal

threats demands not just attention but a collective resurgence. It's a holistic approach that leaves no corner unexplored. From homes to global collaborations, from moral fortitude to awakening society-it's a multifaceted journey towards reclaiming our societal fabric. The time to act is now, for in unity lies the strength to overcome the encroaching darkness and build a future free from the shackles of societal ills.

"A society's resilience is measured by its collective commitment to moral forti-

Aubaid Ahmad Akhoon is a distinguished Educational Columnist, **Motivational Speaker, and Associate** Editor of the weekly educational publication 'Education Quill.' akhoon. aubaid@gmail.com A Symphony of Vigilance: As the tendrils of societal erosion extend, we find ourselves at a critical juncture where vigilance must be our guiding force. A symphony of collective efforts is essential to counteract these negative elements. Each individual becomes a guardian, standing united against the encroaching darkness.

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Selfie habit has gone too far on social media



Vijay Garg

Prabhadevi – Dadar Beach is not such a famous beach in Mumbai, but something has changed in recent years. Even at this dirty beach, more people snap selfies and make reels; in the winter months, the Bandra-Worli Sea Link and Mumbai's famous purple sunset provide a spectacular backdrop. The dirt thrown on the beach is hardly visible in these pictures and reels. In fact, such photographers and reel makers are not only in this particular sea coast. But, rather, they have flocked to every place that is beautiful. Such people, instead of experiencing the beauty of the moment, are seen busy taking pictures and making reels from every possible angle. They are more interested in documenting rather than being conscious of their experience. Once documented, the selfie photos, videos, reels are published on various social media platforms like X, Facebook, Instagram, even LinkedIn. We are living in an era where people are more concerned about likes and comments. It is engaged. There is less and less feeling of the place where they go. Obviously, this has happened due to cheap internet as well as the increasing trend of smartphones. In fact,



limited. This trend is also visible on LinkedIn. Now posts are more important, not experience. One effect of this can be clear-

corporate employers. There is always talk about oneself in the biodata, it seems to be showing off, in such a situation, it is

towards their work will lose. Recruiters have to be sharp so they can separate the wheat from the chaff. As Alice Sherwood

to enhance the forces of counterfeiting. Clicking food recipes at restaurants before eating to post online is also a phenomenon now. The trend of pre-wedding photo shoots has also increased. How good things look on social media, even before the real experience of marriage comes to the fore. People have started finding it more important to know this. It has become a must for wedding ceremonies and wedding business models. Of course, honeymoon photos are also important after the wedding. Now nothing seems personal. There are many financially influential people who ride the waves of the stock market and show the world how easy it is to become rich. They think that only they know the way to become rich. This is actually happening. That our desires are being tampered with. Before the rise of social media Asportsperson, an actor, a musician or even a politician could have been a role model, but the rise of Facebook, Instagram and other social media platforms has created a situation where everyone in the world is a potential model. Some models have emerged on social platforms who are very poor socially. Pretense is creating a crisis of authenticity. What is real? What is not? Second, as Sherwood says, there is pressure to pretend to have a perfect life on social media. The grass is always greener on the other sideE. which is not good for mental health. Don't trust your eyes, Sherwood cautions, but remember that you are seeing what you want to see, not what actually is. There is also an aspect that with the increasing number of influencers on social media, competition is eliminating any difference in their content. Sheepishness is increasing and experience is getting lost somewhere.

> **Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist MALOUT**

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Putin, Zelenskyy Invite PM Modi After **Elections: "See India As Peacemaker"**

HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hours after speaking to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The Prime Minister's conversation with the two leaders comes in the backdrop of Putin's reelection as President and no sign of a de-escalation in the Russia-Ukraine war. Sources told NDTV that the two leaders said they see India as a peacemaker.Sources said both Zelenskyy and Putin have invited Prime Minister Modi to visit their countries after the Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Modi last visited Russia in 2018.Prime Minister Modi discussed ways to strengthen India-Ukraine partnership and reiterated the nation's people-centric approach and calls for dialogue and diplomacy for the resolution of the ongoing conflict.

The Prime Minister said India would continue to do everything within its means to support a peaceful solution. Meanwhile, President Zelenskyy appreciated India's continued humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine. The two leaders agreed to remain



In May last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the Ukrainian President on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Japan's Hiroshima. This was the first in-person meeting between the two leaders since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February last year.

Earlier today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dialled Russian President Vladimir Putin, congratulating him again on his reelection to the top office. During their telephonic conversation, both leaders agreed to intensify efforts towards expanding the India-Russia 'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'."Spoke with

President Putin and congratulated him on his re-election as the President of the Russian Federation. We agreed to work together to further deepen and expand the India-Russia Special & Privileged Strategic Partnership in the years ahead," PM Modi said.India has stressed diplomacy and discussion to resolve the conflict which began in February 2022 with Russia's full-scale invasion. The Ministry of External Affairs in a press briefing said, "India desires that there be discussion, there be diplomacy, there be constant engagements so that both sides can come together and find peace."Vladimir Putin won the Presidential elections,

securing 87.17 per cent votes. The Communist Party of Russian Federation candidate Nikolai Kharitonov secured the second spot with 4.1 per cent of the votes while New People Party candidate Vladislav Davankov stood third with 4.8 per cent votes. Putin has served four terms as Russian President. He was first elected President in 2000 and again in 2004, 2012, and 2018. He has effectively remained unchallenged in the polls and has strengthened his control over the Kremlin with another six-year term. The West has described the election as "incredibly undemocratic".Ukraine has urged the US Congress to unblock a \$60 billion aid package, which has been stalled due to political infighting. The delays have been a "shock" for Ukrainian officials, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said in an online briefing for foreign media.

US Defence Secretary Lloys I Austin said, "Since the invasion, Russia has wasted up to USD 211 billion to equip, deploy, maintain and sustain its needless war on its neighbour," Austin said. "Putin's war of choice will cost Russia USD 1.3 trillion in previously anticipated economic growth through

India Criticises Group That Is Opposed To UN Security Council Reforms

HT News Network

United Nations: India has criticised a model for the UN Security Council presented by the Uniting for Consensus group that includes Pakistan, saying it stands against the idea supported by a majority of member states to expand permanent and non-permanent seats and underscored that the world of the 21st century "desperately needs a UN 2.0".

The Uniting for Consensus or UfC comprises Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Spain, and Turkiye. China, a permanent member, and Indonesia are participating in the group as Observers. The UfC group is opposed to the creation of new permanent members in the Security Council. The UfC model entails a Security Council with 26 seats, with an increase only in the nonpermanent, elected members. It proposes creating 9 new long-term seats with immediate re-election possibilities."Threats to international peace and security have become more complex, unpredictable and undefined. The world of the twenty-first century desperately needs a UN 2.0 that is credible, representative, reflecting the needs and aspirations of the member states and capable of maintaining peace and security," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said in response to the UfC model presented by Italy at the Intergovernmen-



tal Negotiations (IGN) meeting on UNSC reforms on Monday."The UfC which comprises 12 countries and 2 observers including a P5 country stands against the idea espoused by a majority of UN member states, namely that of the expansion in permanent and non-permanent categories," she said.Ms Kamboj asked how the UfC model represents Africa, Latin America and Asia. Africa, a 54-member group, is calling for expansion in both categories. "When Africa themselves are asking for expansion in both categories of membership, isn't it uncalled for to do what Africa was subjected to in perpetuity in the past -which is deciding on their behalf? I would look forward to hearing from you on the rationale of deciding that Africa amongst others should not be represented in the permanent category," she said.

Ms Kamboj said the point on Africa also extends to the member states from the Global South. She said India "believes that without representation, without a mandate, a seat, a voice - which representation entails, members of the Global South.

Election Commission Made Seizures Worth Rs 176 Crore In Andhra Pradesh In 2024

HT News Network

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena today said the Election Commission seized cash, precious metals, narcotics and others worth 176 crore since January 1

in the run-up to the simultaneous Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The CEO noted that of

the seizures, cash amounted to 78 crore, precious metals 41 crore and nar-30 crore.

"In the past three days since the announcement of the poll schedule, we have seized cash, liquor, drugs and freebies worth 3.39 crore," said Mr Meena, addressing a press conference at the secretariat.

Of the seizures worth 3.39 crore, he said liquor amounted to 1.6 crore, cash 80 lakh and the balance, drugs and freebies.

Mr Meena also said that the Election Commission is taking stock of liquor production and storage with respect to manufacturers, warehouses and retailers from the Excise



Department on a daily basis to compare their trends with the same day of the previous year.

According to the Election Commission guidelines, the CEO said that if storage levels are roughly the same as the previous year on this day, then it can be inferred that liquor is not being used to influence

"So, we get the report from the Excise Department everyday and until today there is no deviation. The stock and sale are lower than this day last

year," he said. With Model Code of Conduct (MCC) kicking off on the election schedule announcement day, the CEO said two lakh political posters, banners and hoardings were removed from public places in the

The authority has also removed 1.5 lakh pieces of such material from private places. The CEO's office receives daily reports on these numbers from the district collectors' offices. Mr Meena said these numbers may increase in the

Similarly, 94 cases were booked against defacement of property and 37 on misuse of vehicles, violations pertaining to loud speakers, illegal meetings and the liquor production and inducements. In total, 385 cases were booked in the past three days which include MCC violations, seizures and others. Mr Meena also said that the **Election Commission has** received 1,307 complaints against violations through the CVigil app and 74 percent of all those cases were resolved within 100 minutes, except 40. He said the ECI aims to resolve 95 percent of all the CVigil complaints within 100 minutes.

> The official also said that the Election Commission is receiving many complaints against government employees for allegedly campaigning in the polls.

Need To Get Out Of "Cult Worship" That Nehru Era Was Great: S Jaishankar

HT News Network

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar today took a critical view of some of the key decisions made by the Jawaharlal Nehru government, and said one needs to get out of this "cult worship" that the period from 1946 onwards was "great years" and the country did "splendidly".

In the early years, it was very much "a Nehruvian ideological bubble" when it came to foreign policy and "vestiges of that continue, even today," he said in response to a question during a session at the News18 Rising Bharat Summit.

A career diplomat-turned-politician, Mr Jaishankar spoke on a range of issues such as India's role during G20 presidency, the criticism surrounding the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, abrogation of Article 370, and India-China and India-Pakistan relations in the current context and the geopolitical scenario.

Asked about the legacy of the foreign poli-



cy of the government in the early years after independence, Mr Jaishankar said, "You got Pakistan wrong, you got China wrong, you got US right, and we had a great foreign policy. So,

"I am not saying that today, benefit of 2024, let's look back 1954 or 1950, I am saying, somebody in 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, as you were taking those decisions, stood up and said, 'please, Mr Nehru, what you are doing, have

you looked at this aspect of it'. So this is not hindsight, these are Nehru's contemporaries who are questioning decisions which Nehru was taking at that point of time," he said. The former foreign secretary cited Syama Prasad Mookerjee's views on the Nehru-Liaquat Pact and views of B R Ambedkar on Nehru's decisions to buttress his claim."So, this is not hindsight, this is not a political polemic. I am placing before the younger generation, historical situation, which is what I called the 'road not taken', that road was available and that road was marked," he said.

"Now, I am not saying they were no-brainers, there are pluses and minuses, but we need to get out of this cult worship that everything from 1946 till, pick your year... that these were great years, and we did splendidly and if anything went wrong, other people were to blame.

"But Nehru's foreign policy is such an impeccable theology that even today, whoever comes to power must follow it. And, any deviation is somewhere wrong," Mr Jaishankar said.

"No MLA Quit": Dushyant Chautala Says Party Intact After Split With BJP

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Dushyant Chautala told NDTV Wednesday that no member of his Jannayak Janata Party had quit following last week's split with the Bharatiya Janata Party in Haryana - a rift that cost the party a prominent place in the ruling alliance and Mr Chautala the Deputy Chief Minister's chair.

"If you are saying someone has left.. then that is wrong. No MLA has resigned or parted ways. Yes, there was a whip that was issued. It was decided we would abstain (from the floor test for the new government led by Nayab Singh Saini) and we did. We had five MLAs at a rally addressed by our President (Ajay Singh Chautala, the founder and Mr Chautala's father) and five in Chandigarh."

"I have not of heard a single MLA resigning. If, in the future, someone resigns, then... I mean, now it is political season, in which one person jumps to one party and a second person jumps back," Mr Chautala told NDTV.

Mr Chautala also confirmed what was widely reported - that the BJP-JJP rift was over a failed Lok Sabha seat-share deal - but quashed talk that the discord had extended to half his 10 MLAs crossing over. He stressed the JJP cadre remains committed to success in the Lok Sabha election and the Assembly poll.

"I just want one to make one clear statement on all of this... we were discussing seat-share deals in the NDA (the BJP-led alliance). There were four rounds of meetings in Delhi... in the end we could not agree on the numbers, so the JJP expressed its views. We told the BJP will not contest any Lok Sabha seat with them, but said we need to finalise the Assem-



bly deal," he said."I think after that the BIP took its decision - that the Chief Minister (Mr Khattar) will resign and a 10 to 46, the magic number that will allow him to form the next state government independent of the BJP.

Delhi Court Allows Jailed BRS Leader K **Kavitha To Meet Sons, Mother In Custody**

HT News Network



New Delhi: A Delhi court has allowed BRS leader K Kavitha, currently in the Enforcement Directorate custody in connection with a money laundering case linked to the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy, to meet her two sons, mother and other family members. Special Judge MK Nagpal passed the order on an application moved by advocate Nitesh Rana, appearing for Ms Kavitha, who sought inclusion of seven more names from the family or relations of the accused to be allowed to meet her in the ED custody. The judge, however, noted that in an order passed on March 16, the court already allowed six persons to meet Ms Kavitha, and said that the additional names cannot be included. Mr Rana then urged the court to retain only the name of Ms Kavitha's brother out of the six in the previous list, and to include the seven new names who were her close family members."Hence, in view of the submissions being made and in modification of the order dated March 16, 2024, it is being directed that apart from her brother K Taraka Rama Rao mentioned in the said order and in exclusion of remaining persons named in the said order, the accused be also permitted to meet the family members who have been named in the present application," the judge said. However, the judge made it clear that the restrictions about meeting two or three persons only on one day shall continue to be in operation.

RBI Governor Meets Nirmala Sitharaman Ahead Of Central Bank's Meet

HT News Network

New Delhi: Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for a non-agenda courtesy meeting, a fortnight ahead of the central bank's meet to decide on benchmark policy rate.

Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is scheduled to meet from April 3-5, the first for 2024-25 fiscal year. The MPC meet is expected to spell out inflation and growth trajectory for financial year beginning April 1.

RBI in its last policy released in February projected a growth rate of 7 per cent and inflation outlook at 4.5 per cent for FY25.



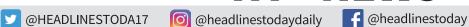
An RBI bulletin on Tuesday said food price pressure is an obstacle to swifter fall in retail inflation to the Reserve Bank's target of 4 per cent.Retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) is on a decline since December and was at

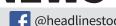
5.09 per cent in February. It further said the global economy is losing steam, with growth slowing in some of the most resilient economies and high frequency indicators pointing to further levellin in the period ahead.In India, real GDP growth was at a sixquarter high in the third quarter of 2023-24, powered by strong momentum, robust indirect taxes, and lower subsidies. The high visibility of

structural demand and healthier corporate and bank balance sheets will likely be the galvanizing forces for growth going forward, the article on the 'State of Economy' in the central bank's March bulletin said.It also said India can sustain 8 per cent annual GDP growth and the conducive macroeconomic configuration may become a launching pad for a step-up in the country's

new government will be formed. We decided not to be part of this government," he explained.Mr Chautala said the decision was taken "as a cadre... as a party" that wanted to go out and win every Lok Sabha seat; Haryana has 10, all of which were won by the BJP in the last election. He said he also told the BJP the two parties also needed to sit down and plan for the Assembly election."We demanded Hisar and Bhiwani-Mahendragarh... BJP wanted to give Rohtak. But by then there were messages that we will go out and cut votes..." he said, hinting at behind-the-scenes discord."Every party has one agenda - the cadre has to increase and vote share has to increase. In the past we have seen this, even with BJP, which had two MPs and now has 303. I think it is our cadre's dream also to have all 10 MPs from Haryana and for the state's voice to be strong," he continued.Mr Chautala told NDTV the focus for him, now, is to ensure a first Lok Sabha win for the JJP and then ramp up the party's strength in the Assembly - from







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Rajnath Singh Discusses Defence Cooperation Issues With US Defence Chief

HT News Network

Ranchi, Bihar: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a telephonic conversation with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Monday.

The two leaders, as they engaged in a conversation, discussed a range of bilateral, regional security and defence cooperation issues.

"They reviewed the recent bilateral events such as the INDUS-X Summit held in New Delhi in February 2024, and the bilateral Tri-Service exercise 'Tiger Triumph' which has also commenced in India on March 18, 2024," the Defence Ministry release read.

Meanwhile, Lloyd Austin appreciated the important role being played by the Indian Navy in conducting anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean Region.

"The two Ministers discussed ways and means to implement the India-US Defence Cooperation Roadmap which was concluded last year. Other defence



industrial cooperation issues such as repair of US naval ships in Indian shipyards were also briefly discussed," according to

the Ministry of Defence. It was during the India-US Ministerial 2+2 Dialogue in November 2023, that Rajnath Singh and Lloyd Austin had last met in New Delhi.

India and the United States are all set for 'Tiger Triumph 2024' as the bilateral,

tri-service exercise between the two nations commenced on Monday and will take place until March 31.

"In consonance with the established partnership between India and the US, a bilateral tri-service humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) exercise between both countries, Tiger Triumph-24, $is\, scheduled\, on\, the\, Eastern\, Seaboard\, from$ March 18-31," the Ministry of Defence said in an official press release.

Notably, the exercise is aimed at developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations and refining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enable rapid and smooth coordination between forces of both countries.

The US would be represented by US Navy ships with embarked troops of the US Marine Corps and US Army.

The harbour phase is scheduled for March 18-25.

Moreover, personnel from both navies would participate in training visits, subject matter expert exchanges, sports Events and social interactions.

PM Modi Holds Talks With Bhutanese **Counterpart On Ways To Strengthen Ties**

HT News Network

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held extensive talks with his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay focusing on ways to further strengthen the ties between the two countries.

The talks took place hours after Mr Tobgay began a five-day visit to India, his first foreign trip after assuming the charge of the top office in January. Mr Tobgay was received at the airport in the national capital by Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey."The visit of @PMBhutan is in keeping with the exemplary ties of friendship between India & Bhutan," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on 'X'.The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bhutan on extending cooperation in the field of energy efficiency. The Cabinet also cleared the signing of an agreement between Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for cooperation in the area of food safety.In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Wednesday said



Mr Tobgay's visit will provide an opportunity to the two sides to review the progress in the "unique partnership" and to discuss ways to expand the "enduring" ties of friendship and cooperation between India and Bhutan. Mr Tobgay's visit to India came against the backdrop of China and Bhutan looking at an expeditious resolution of their festering boundary row that could have implications for India's security interests. Around five months back, Bhutan's then Foreign Minister Tandi Dorji held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Beijing. A Chinese readout on the talks said Bhutan firmly abides by the one-China principle and stands ready to work with China for an early settlement of the boundary issue and advance the political process of establishing diplomatic relations.

"Where's Evidence": Ally Questions Canada Charge On Hardeep Nijjar Killing

HT News Network

New Delhi: Amid the diplomatic face-off between India and Canada over Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of an India role in the killing of a Khalistani terrorist, a key ally of Ottawa has questioned the lack of evidence of New Delhi's involvement.Winston Peters, New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, has told The Indian Express in an interview Canada has not shared any evidence that establishes its allegations.

At the centre of the diplomatic row between India and Canada is the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar (45), chief of the banned Khalistan Tiger Force and one of India's most-wanted terrorists. Nijjar was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Canada's British Columbia in June.

In September last year, shortly after he attended the G20 summit in India, Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau said in parliament that Canadian security agencies were "actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the Government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar". India has trashed the allegations,



describing them as "absurd" and "motivated". Bilateral relations between the countries have since nose-dived. In October, Canada withdrew 41 diplomats, citing an Indian threat to "unethically revoke" their diplomatic immunity. India had then rejected the idea that it had violated the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations.

"The state of our bilateral relations, the much higher number of Canadian diplomats in India, and their continued interference in our internal affairs warrant a parity in mutual diplomatic presence in New Delhi and Ottawa," it had said in a statement.The US, an ally of both Canada and India, has said Washington.

Donald Lu highlights poll irregularities in House testimony

HT News Network

WASHINGTON: Ahead of his appearance at a Congressional panel on Tuesday, US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu submitted a written statement expressing Washington's concerns about irregularities in the Feb 8 elections while also emphasising the need to stay engaged with Pakistan to help it navigate through the crises it is facing.

Mr Lu is the diplomat whose supposed warning to former Pakistan Ambassador to the US Asad Majeed was the subject of a cipher sent by the envoy to Islamabad. This is the same document that former PM Imran Khan used to allege a US conspiracy to oust his government in



2022, and Mr Khan is currently on trial for mishandling the same confidential document.Mr Lu is scheduled to testify today before a subcommittee of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, at a hearing titled 'Pakistan After the Elections: Examining the Future of Democracy in Pakistan and the US-Pakistan Relationship'.This bipartisan hearing is

expected to draw significant attendance from both Democratic and Republican legislators.US diplomat stresses need to help Islamabad navigate economic challengesIn his writtentestimony, Mr Lu highlights Washington's concerns about election irregularities in Pakistan, which encompass restrictions on freedoms, electoral violence, and allegations of interference.He also mentions that several political leaders faced obstacles, such as the inability to register specific candidates and political parties, which disadvantaged them in the electoral process.

Additionally, he highlights the harassment and abuse faced by many journalists, particularly female journalists, at the hands of party supporters.

Clans step in to protect

CAIRO: Armed and masked men from an array of clans and factions have started providing security to aid convoys in Gaza, Palestinian officials and sources in the Hamas group say. Video footage obtained by Reuters showed a convoy of trucks entering Gaza City with foreign aid overnight, watched by several men armed with AK-47 assault rifles and others wielding sticks. With Israeli forces sworn to eliminating Hamas since its deadly Oct 7 raid on Israel, it has become highly risky for anyone linked to the group to emerge into the open to provide security for aid deliver-

 including Fatah — have stepped in to help provide security for the aid convoys, according to the Palestinian officials and Hamas sources. With public order strained, safe distribution of supplies becomes increasingly hard to guaranteeThey did not identify the clans and factions, but said Hamas' ability to rally such groups behind it over security showed it retains influence, and that efforts by Israel to build its own administrative system to keep order in Gaza were being resisted.

Gaza aid

HT News Network

ies to desperate civilians. So numerous clans, civil society groups and factions

Putin to visit China in May for talks with Xi

HT News Network

BEIJING: Russian President Vladimir Putin will travel to China in May for talks with Xi Jinping, in what could be the Kremlin chief's first overseas trip of his new presidential term, according to five sources familiar with

Western governments on Monday condemned Putin's re-election as unfair and undemocratic. But China, India and North Korea congratulated the veteran leader on extending his rule by a further six years, highlighting geopolitical fault lines that have widened since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

"Putin will visit China," one of the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Reuters. The details were independently confirmed by four other sources, who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

Another of the sources said Putin's trip to China would



probably take place in the second half of May. Two of the sources said the Putin visit would come before Xi's planned trip to Europe.

The Kremlin, when asked about the Reuters report, said information on Putin's visits would be released

closer to the date. "Several presidential visits and several high-level contacts are being prepared at the moment," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "We will inform you as we get closer."

China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond

to a request for comment. China and Russia declared a "no limits" partnership in February 2022 when Putin visited Beijing just days before he sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine, triggering the deadliest land war in Europe since World War Two.The United States casts China as its biggest competitor and Russia as its biggest nation-state threat while US President Joe Biden argues that this century will be defined by an existential contest between democracies and autocracies. Putin and Xi share a broad world view, which sees the West as decadent and in decline just as China challenges US supremacy in everything from quantum computing and synthetic biology to espionage and hard military power.

Gunmen Open Fire At Pakistan's Gwadar Port, 2 **Attackers Killed**

■ HT News Network

Unidentified gunmen opened fire at Pakistan's Gwadar port authority complex in its restive Balochistan province, Geo News reported on Wednesday. Two attackers were killed in retaliatory firing by security personnel, the TV channel said, adding that a blast preceded the firing.

Gwadar's deputy commissioner and police did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Gwadar is located near the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial oil shipping route in the Arabian Sea.

The deep-water port is key to the multi-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which also encompasses roads and energy projects and is part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative.

China has invested heavily under its Belt and Road Initiative in mineral-rich Balochistan, including developing Gwadar, despite a decades-long separatist insurgency in the area.

Chinese targets have previously come under attack by several terrorist groups in Pakistan. In August, gunmen attacked a convoy of Chinese workers in Gwadar with the separatist Balochistan Liberation Army claiming responsibility for the attack.

Indian Student Goes Missing In US, Parents In Hyderabad Get \$1,200 Ransom Call

■ HT News Network

Hyderabad: The parents of an Indian student studying in the US have received a ransom call demanding nearly a lakh rupees after their son went missing. The unidentified caller informed them their son had been kidnapped and threatened to sell his kidney.

Abdul Mohammed, a 25-year-old from Hyderabad, left home last May to pursue a master's degree in Information Technology at Cleveland University, Ohio.

His family claims he has not spoken to them since March 7. Mohammed Saleem, Abdul's father, received a call last week from an unknown number, informing him that his son has been kidnapped by drug sellers in Cleveland.The unidentified caller then demanded \$1200 to release him but did not specify the mode of payment. He also threatened to sell a kidney of the student to the mafia if they refused to pay, his family said. His parents then informed his relatives in the US, who filed a missing complaint with the Cleveland police. Mr Mohammed was wearing a white T-shirt, red jacket, and blue jeans, said the cops in their watch order.In an effort to locate him, the family has also written to the Indian Council in Chicago.

The kidnapping was reported a week after another Indian student was found dead in the US, the ninth such incident in less than three months. The body of Abhijeeth Paruchuru, 20, an engineering student in Boston, was found in a car in a forest. But initial probe ruled out anything suspicious, the Consulate General of India in New York had said.

Ukraine's survival in danger, warns Pentagon chief

HT News Network

RAMSTEIN BASE (Germany): US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Tuesday warned that Ukraine's survival was in danger and sought to convince allies that the United States was committed to Kyiv, even as Washington has essentially run out of money to continue arming Ukrainian forces.

Republican House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson has so far refused to call a vote on a bill that would provide \$60 billion more for Ukraine and the White House has been scrambling to find ways to send assistance to Kyiv, which has been battling Russian forces for more than two years. Austin is leading the monthly meeting known as

the Ukraine defence contact group (UDCG), held at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, of about 50 allies that have been militarily supporting Ukraine. "Ukraine's survival is in danger," Austin said in a

press conference after the meeting. Zelensky appeals to Kyiv's allies to supply more air

"Our allies and partners continue to step up, the United States must also," he added. Austin, who is traveling for the first time this year

since prostate cancer treatment, did not say how Washington would support Ukraine without additional funding. Officials say the lack of funding available is already

having an impact on the ground in Ukraine and Ukrainian forces are having to manage scarce resources.

"I think our allies are acutely aware of our funding situation and the Ukrainians more so than anyone because of the shortages that are resulting from us not being able to supply them," a senior US defence official said.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky appealed to Kyiv's allies on Tuesday to supply more air defences, saying Russia had launched 130 missiles, more than 320 attack drones and almost 900 guided bombs in attacks this month alone.

Last week the Biden administration said it would send \$300 million in military assistance to Ukraine, but added that it was an extraordinary move after unexpected savings from military contracts the Pentagon had made.

Officials have not ruled out that they could find additional savings, but they say that amount would not be enough to make up for the lack of Congressional action. Experts say that Austin will face a sceptical audience in Europe.

NIT Srinagar to host 2 day National Conference on RASE-2024 in June Director releases brochure of the summit at campus

HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 20: The National Conference on Role of Academicdriven Startups in Developing Economy of J&K ((RASE-2024) will be hosted by NIT Srinagar from 29-30th June this year.

The conference will be held in association with prestigious institutions including the Department of Holistic Education, Vidya Bharti, Punjab.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A Ravinder Nath released a brochure of the (RASE-2024). It was attended by Dr. Thakur SKR, Sci/Engr-SF and Director, DHE&VBITR, eminent educationists Vijay Nadda and Deshraj Sharma, Dr.

Saad Parvez, Head, IIEDC, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Dr. HS Pali, Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Rout and Shahid Abbas Mir, CEO-iTBI Greenovator, Incubation Foundation, NIT Srinagar.

In his keynote address, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath said this innovative conference is expected to bridge between academia and industry.

"The conference will serve as a dynamic platform for students, researchers, and entrepreneurs, facilitating discussions on various aspects of startup culture, spanning from ideation to execution. It will offer valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities present within the startup ecosystem," he



Prof. Nath said the primary goal of this conference is to nurture a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among the institute's community, including students, faculty, and local educational institutions.

"It will also act as a bridge between academia and industries, with eminent innovators from across the country sharing their experiences to inspire and guide attendees," Director NIT Srinagar added.

Dr. Saad Parvez, Organizing Secre-

tary of RASE-2024 and Head of IIEDC, expressed that this conference aims to bring together expertise from various institutions to offer a thorough workshop covering different aspects of innovation and startup development.

He mentioned that the summit will feature local innovators and entrepreneurs alongside renowned speakers and industry experts from academia and the corporate sector.

"We will conduct talks and interactive sessions covering topics like generating ideas, researching markets, creating business models, exploring funding options, understanding legal aspects, and more," Dr. Saad said.

He said participants will actively engage in hands-on activities, group discussions, and workshops to enhance practical learning and skills. Budding entrepreneurs will have the chance to pitch their startup ideas to a panel of judges comprising industry experts and investors. They will receive constructive feedback and guidance to refine their ideas and strategies.

Dr. Saad said that this conference will offer plenty of networking opportunities, allowing participants to connect with peers, mentors, and industry professionals. This environment will foster collaboration and open doors for potential partnerships," he said.

DEO Kulgam chairs meeting of enforcement agencies

Farooq Rather



KULGAM, MARCH 20: The District Election Officer (DEO) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting of enforcement agencies at the mini-secretariat, here.

During the meeting the DEO called for strict implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and urged all for strict adherence to all guidelines of Election Commission of India.

DEO directed that FST and SST teams shall work in coordinated manner as per the guidelines of ECI.

It is important to mention here that a dedicated district level control room has been established here to ensure seamless redressal of public complaints and ensure smooth conduct of elections.

The meeting was attended by the AROs, Dy-DEO, Nodal Officers, ETO, Manager Lead Bank, Assistant Controller Drugs, Dy-SP Hq and other concerned officers.

Lok Sabha Elections-2024: VAFs under SVEEP held in different educational Zones of Kupwara

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, MARCH 20: In its endeavour to extend electoral literacy to adult populations, District Nodal Officer SVEEP Kupwara today organized awareness programs in different educational Zones across the district.

Community members, general public and students participated in the events held at different Zones of the district including Khumryal, Langate, Mawar, Vilgam, Bahadurkote, Rajwar and Sogam.

Awareness Forums (VAFs) are informal forums for generating discussions and awareness around the electoral process. Community members, general public and $students\,participated\,in\,the\,events\,held\,at\,different\,Zones$ of the district including Khumryal, Langate, Mawar, Vilgam, Bahadurkote, Rajwar and Sogam.

Lok Sabha elections 2024: ADDC Ganderbal holds meeting with Flying

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, MARCH 20: The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani today held a meeting with the flying squads, designated magistrates, Videographers and other officers in his office chamber, here.

The ADDC impressed upon the officers to ensure the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) is strictly followed and violations if any are promptly reported to the



concerned quarters.

He said that all designated teams have to properly follow the SOPs issued by Election Commission of

India and also ensure public safety and convenience. ADDC asked all teams to submit their daily activ-

On the occasion, the ADDC briefed the videographers accompanying the FSTs about their role and responsibility and asked them to cover each activity sensibly and with utmost

The involvement of

Booth Level Officers (BLOs)

was instrumental in dis-

seminating crucial infor-

mation about the electoral

process and empowering

attendees with knowledge

about their voting rights

participants' dedication

In recognition of the

and responsibilities.

also be prepared to reach the spot instantly in case

of any complaint received.

isterial powers delegated

to all the heads of the flying

squads are aimed to empower them for proper

implementation of law and

He also said that mag-

pilgrims/ 'Lady without Mehram Category' on March, 26 at Haj House, Bemina HT News Network

Orientation Session for female

SRINAGAR, MARCH 20: The J&K Haj Committee is organising a separate Orientation / Training Session for selected female pilgrims especially females belonging to 'Lady Without Mehram Category' on 26th March, 2024 at Haj House, Bemina, Srinagar.

The Training programme shall commence at 11.00 am. As such, all the interested female pilgrims especially 'Lady without Mehram Category' pilgrims shall attend the said Training programme as per schedule.

Lok Sabha elections-2024: **Election staff imparted** training in Poll Expense **Monitoring at Kupwara**

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, MARCH 20: In order to explain the role and responsibility of various teams constituted to keep an eye on poll expenditure and the model code of conduct (MCC) during the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the District Administration Kupwara on Tuesday held a special training workshop for polling staff to ensure vigil of poll expenditure.

Members of the Expenditure Monitoring Team, Assistant Expenditure Observers, Video Surveillance Teams, and Video Viewing Teams participated in the training session.

Chairing the session, Nodal Officer Elections/ NLMT, Sameer Jan said that all team members should be acquainted with the methodology to calculate the poll expenditure.

He said that the teams had been given the responsibility of monitoring election expenditure of candidates and parties and it was necessary to impart them training about the methods to do their duty.

On the occasion, team members were informed about the role and responsibilities entrusted upon them by the Election Commission of India to ensure proper implementation of guidelines issued by the Commission.

Srinagar's 10 BN of SSB Pays Tribute to Reyaj Ahmad Gojar

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 20, 2024: In a ceremony commemorating Martyrs Day, the Srinagar based 10 BN of SSB Batamaloo, paid tribute to the late Reyaj Ahmad Gojar Khatana, a jawan who laid down his life on March 20th 2019, during cross-border firing at Village Kundali Bariala Jabda, in Uri sector of Baramulla District.

The occasion witnessed gathering of officials of 10 BN, dignitaries, and the family members of the martyr.

The event commenced with a wreath-laying ceremony, as Jawans, senior officers, including Shri Rohitashwa, Commandant of the 10 BN SSB, alongside Shri Reyaz's wife, Smt. Rabiya Begum, and grieving family members, paid their respects to the deceased. A minute of silence was observed, reflecting the nation's gratitude for the service rendered by the soldier.

Addressing the gathering, Commandant Rohitashwa reiterated the nation's unwavering support and indebtedness to the SSB personnel who continue to safeguard the country's borders and maintain internal security with utmost dedication and valor. The Soldier's family was honored and presented with tokens of appreciation as a gesture of gratitude for their immense sacrifice and unwavering support to the nation.

The event concluded with a pledge ceremony to uphold the legacy of the nation's martyrs and to ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten. Addressing the gathering, Commandant Rohitashwa reiterated the nation's unwavering support and indebtedness to the SSB personnel who continue to safeguard the country's borders and maintain internal security with utmost dedication and valor. The Soldier's family was honored and presented with tokens of appreciation as a gesture of gratitude for their immense sacrifice and unwavering support to the nation. The event concluded with a pledge ceremony to uphold the legacy of the nation's martyrs and to ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten.

SVEEP: Voters Awareness program organised at Kaman Post, Uri

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 20: The Sub Division Administration in Uri orchestrated a dynamic Voters Awareness program at Kaman Post Uri, as part of the ongoing Systematic Voter Education Electoral Participation (SVEEP) ini-

The event, aimed at fostering electoral literacy and encouraging robust participation in the democratic process, witnessed a commendable turnout and active engagement from various stakeholders.

Program was presided over by the Sub Divisional Magistrate Uri, Javid Ahmad Rather. The program saw the enthusiastic participation of Additional Nodal Officer SVEEP, Vice Principal GDC Uri, SDPO Uri, AEROs, Principals, Zonal Education Officers, BDO Uri, Supervisors, BLOs,



school principals and teachers, local residents, and students from diverse educational backgrounds.

The event featured a diverse array of interactive activities, including skits, cultural performances, debates, speeches, painting competitions, and slogan writing contests. These engaging sessions captivated the audience, fostering a spirit of civic responsibility and democratic participation.

During his address, SDM Uri underscored the pivotal role of electoral literacy in shaping informed citizenry and emphasized the significance of active participation in the electoral process, particularly with the Lok Sabha 2024 elections on the horizon. He urged all eligible voters, especially first-time voters, to exercise their franchise

responsibly and contribute to the democratic fabric of the nation.

and enthusiasm, participation certificates were distributed by SDM Uri, in presence of Additional Nodal Officer SVEEP. During his address, SDM Uri underscored the pivotal role of electoral literacy in shaping informed citizenry and emphasized the significance of active participation in the electoral process, particularly with the Lok Sabha 2024 elections on the horizon. He urged all eligible voters, especially first-time voters, to exercise their franchise responsibly and contribute to the democratic fabric of

the nation.

Song 'Main Bharat Hoon' translated into

Kashmiri language was played. Students

from various colleges and ambassadors

delivered valuable lectures on the theme,

Voters Education & Participation Programme under SVEEP held at GDC Women Anantnag

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MARCH 20: A voters' education and participation programme under SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) was today held at Government Degree College (GDC) for Women Anantnag.

The theme of the programme was 'Importance of Vote in Democratic Setup' and 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure.'

The programme was organized jointly by the SVEEP Cell Anantnag, Government Degree College for Women, District InformationCentre&CulturalUnit(Information Kashmir). It is a part of the SVEEP campaign being organized in Anantnag under the guidance of the District Election Officer SF. Hamid.

The programme was attended by the students and staff from various colleges, District Nodal Officer, SVEEP, Coordinator,



During the programme the Election

SVEEP and other officials.

and a quiz contest was also organized. A Nukkad Natak (short play) on the participation of eligible voters in voting was also enacted.

The District Nodal Officer, SVEEP, Anantnag while speaking to the students emphasized on the role of voting in safeguarding democratic ideals of the country. Other speakers encouraged the students and participants to raise awareness about the value of vote among their families and friends. Notably, the emphasis of the SVEEP campaign in Anantnag is on motivating and encouraging general masses, the first time voters and inclusive voters such as the ones from various categories as Persons with Disability, female, transgender and tribals to participate & vote in the upcoming General elections.

Lok Sabha Elections-2024

First phase of EVM randomisation kick starts at Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

PUBLICATIONHEADLINES

KISHTWAR, MARCH 20: The inaugural phase of randomisation for Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) for the forthcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024 took place here today under the chairmanship and close supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav.

ADC Kishtwar/ARO Kishtwar, Pawan Kotwal; ACR Kishtwar/ARO Inderwal, Idrees Lone; SDM Paddar/ ARO Paddar-Nagseni, Amit Kumar as well as other officials from the District Elections office and representatives from political parties were also present on the occasion.

This initial randomisation phase focused on the allocation of ballot units, control units, and VVPATs for three assembly segments within the district.

During the event, DEO Kishtwar emphasized the objective of ensuring impartial and transparent elections devoid of human intervention, facilitated by dedicated software for randomisation.

DEO, Dr. Devansh Yadav elabo-



rated that following randomisation, the EVMs will be securely transferred to dedicated strong rooms in respective constituencies, ensuring rigorous security protocols.

Subsequent randomisation phases

will be conducted to allocate EVMs to polling stations.

DEO Kishtwar along with AROs and senior officers and representatives of political parties conducted personal visit to the strong rooms

established for EVM and took personal appraisal of the arrangements on spot.

Prior to the randomisation process, political representatives received a detailed briefing on the procedure by resource person, Vikrant Thakur, ensuring their confidence in the integrity of the process and affirming that all requisite measures have been enacted to uphold the sanctity of the polls.

Among others, Nodal officer for EVM Management Nirbhay Sharma; DIO NIC Pankaj Kashap; Election NT, Angrez Singh Jasrotia, and other officers were also present. During the event, DEO Kishtwar emphasized the objective of ensuring impartial and transparent elections devoid of human intervention, facilitated by dedicated software for randomisation.

DEO, Dr. Devansh Yadav elaborated that following randomisation, the EVMs will be securely transferred to dedicated strong rooms in respective constituencies, ensuring rigorous security protocols. Subsequent randomisation phases will be conducted to allocate EVMs to polling stations.

Lok Sabha Elections-2024 Training Session for Micro observers, Video viewing teams, Magistrates held in Doda

HT News Network

DODA, MARCH 20: A training session was organized in Doda for Micro observers, Video viewing teams, and Magistrates for upcoming Lok Sabha Election's 2024. The training session was held with an aim to equip these key personnel with necessary skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their duties during the election process. The training session covered various aspects of election monitoring and management. During the training session, Prof. Dr Akhtar Hussain, District Level Master Trainer(DLMT)briefed the participants about roles and responsibilities of Micro observers, Video viewing teams as well as the legal framework governing elections.

The participants also received training on how



to handle sensitive information and maintain the integrity of electoral process.The session included practical exercises and simulations to help participants familiarize themselves with the tools and technologies they will be using during the elections. Additionally, experts in the field shared their insights and best practices to enhance the effectiveness of participants in their

respective roles. The training session was held with an aim to equip these key personnel with necessary skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their duties during the election process. The training session covered various aspects of election monitoring and management. During the training session, Prof. Dr Akhtar Hussain, District Level Master Trainer (DLMT) briefed.

SVEEP Campaign organised at Padder Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 20: A SVEEP Campaign was today organised at Gulabgarh, Padder, with special focus on women voters, youth voters, voters with disability and senior citizen voters under the supervision of BDO HQ, Chahat Bharti, deputed as Women Nodal officer in Padder Nagseni-AC.

During the campaign, an exhaustive interaction session was conducted with Key stakeholders, women voters, AWWs, ASHA workers, BLOs, NRLM SHGs, etc. wherein detailed sensitization regarding poll processes, gender disparity in voter turnout and electors facilitation was held order to ensure free and fair elections.

A massive rally was also organised through market area to create awareness among masses regarding participation in upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Tehsildar Handwara Leads Market Inspection to Enforce Fair **Pricing and Quality Standardsr**

■ DR.AB QAYOOM



Handwara, Mar, 19: In a bid to ensure fair pricing and maintain quality standards, a comprehensive market inspection was conducted in Handwara town, Kupwara district. Led by Tehsildar Handwara Zeeshan Khan the inspection aimed to combat overpricing, illegal profiteering, and black marketing activities rampant in the area. Accompanied by a team of officials including employees of MC Handwara, SHO Showkat Ahmad, and food experts, Tehsildar meticulously examined various establishments. The focus was not only on ensuring compliance with government-approved rates for essential commodities but also on guaranteeing their quality and availability. The inspection team emphasized the significance of prominently displaying rate lists and maintaining the freshness of consumables. Furthermore, stringent measures were taken to address encroachments on footpaths and pavements, ensuring unimpeded pedestrian access. Speaking to the media, Tehsildar reiterated the administration's commitment to fair trade practices and consumer welfare. He emphasized the importance of eliminating malpractices that exploit consumers and undermine the integrity of the market. The market inspection in Handwara serves as a reminder of the administration's resolve to uphold transparency and accountability in commerce. By actively addressing issues of overpricing and ensuring quality standards, the authorities are working towards fostering a fair and equitable trading environment for all stakeholder. As consumers, it is crucial to remain vigilant and report any instances of unfair pricing or substandard goods. By working together with the administration, we can create a marketplace where everyone abides by the rules, ensuring a fair deal for all. In conclusion, the market inspection in Handwara underscores the administration's proactive stance in promoting fair trade practices and safeguarding consumer interests. It is a testament to their dedication to creating a marketplace where honesty, integrity, and fairness prevail.Let us continue to support such initiatives and contribute to building a thriving economy founded on principles of fairness and accountability.

Lok Sabha Election 2024:

SVEEP awareness programme held for Women field functionaries in Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 20: District Election Office Kishtwar, led by District Election Officer, Dr. Devansh Yadav orchestrated a significant awareness and sensitization workshop today under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative for Anganwari Workers, ICDS helpers, ASHAs, and Women Self Help Group Members.The event took place under the diligent supervision of Women Nodal Officer for Kishtwar Assembly Constituency 49, Chandan Manhas.

The primary objective of the program was to engage women field func-



tionaries and workers in amplifying awareness regarding equitable participation of women in the electoral process, with a special emphasis on upholding ethical voting

The workshop witnessed the presence of District Information Officer, Dr. Kuldeep Kumar, CDPO Kishtwar, Ifat Ara other relevant stakehold-

In her opening remarks, Nodal Officer, Chandan Manhas underscored the pivotal role of women citizens in the democratic process, particularly in the upcoming General Lok Sabha Elections of 2024. She emphasized the indispensable contribution of women frontline workers in galvanizing awareness thereby fostering maximum participation in democratic exercise.

She reiterated the commitment towards inclusion of every eligible woman of voting age in the Electoral Roll/Register, leaving no one behind. She articulated that the active participation of women in the democratic fabric is indispensable for nurturing an inclusive society that genuinely reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of all constituents.

During the workshop, participants were tasked with identifying women who are yet to be enrolled in the Voters List/Electoral Roll and urged to liaise with respective BLOs to facilitate along with Master Trainer, among women voters to the registration of eligible Riyaz Ahmed Butt, among exercise their voting rights, women voters and firsttime voters alike.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024 First Phase EVM randomization conducted in Doda

HT News Network

DODA, MARCH 20: The inaugural phase of randomization for Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024 took place in Doda today.

The process was overseen by District Election Officer (DEO), Harvinder Singh in presence of senior officials and political party representatives. The randomization aims to allocate Ballot Units, Control Units, and VVPATs for AC-51, AC-52, and AC-53, comprising a total of 529 polling centers. The total 739 number of EVMs were allotted for three assembly constituencies in the districtDEO, Harvinder Singh, on the occasion, emphasized that the objective of randomization is to ensure transparent and impartial elections, devoid of human interference, facilitated by dedicated software. Prior to the randomization, political representatives were briefed on the process, with assurances from the DEO regarding the implementation of necessary measures to uphold the integrity of electoral process. Following randomization, EVMs will be transferred to secure strong rooms within their respective constituencies, where they will be under rigorous security and surveillance. Subsequent phases will entail further randomization for the allocation of EVMs to individual polling stations. This meticulous approach underscores the commitment.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024... First Phase randomization of EVMs held in Kathua

HT News Network

KATHUA, MARCH 20: The first phase of randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for the upcoming Parliamentary Elections 2024 was conducted under the supervision of Returning Officer for Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency, Dr. Rakesh Minhas (DC Kathua). The event took place in the presence of senior officials

and representatives from various political parties. The randomization process focused on allocating a total of 1123 Ballot Units, 997 Control Units, and 1029 Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) units for all six assembly segments of the Kathua district like 63-Bani,



64-Billawar, 65-Basohli, 66-Jasrota, 67-Kathua (SC) and 68-Hiranagar.

Dr. Rakesh Minhas, on the occasion highlighted that the primary objective of the randomization process is to

ensure transparent, free and fair elections, devoid of any human intervention. The randomization was carried out using dedicated software designed for this purpose.

Before the randomization took place, the Returning Officer briefed political representatives about the process, reassuring them of comprehensive arrangements in place to guarantee fair polls.

Subsequent randomization phases will determine the specific allocation of EVMs to polling stations in the upcoming phases.

The list of all EVM's post randomization were handed over to all political parties present in the randomization. Among others, Nodal Officer EVM Nagesh Singh and DIO NIC Sideshwar Bhagat were also present.

GCW conducts awareness programme under SVEEP at Udhampur

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 20: SVEEP Cell, Government College for Women, Udhampur, in collaboration with District Election Department, (SVEEP team) organized awareness programme under the banner of Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation

The programme was organized under the guidance of Principal of the College, Professor

The resource persons of the awareness programme were Ashwani Koul Supervisor, Sunil Khajuria BLO 144, Ajit Singh BLO 113, and Satinder Singh BLO 143.

The event started with keynote address by Professor Nalini Pathania who emphasized



that the purpose of the programme was to educate the students regarding electoral literacy besides motivating them to participate effectively in the election process so that no voter is left behind.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024

Training programme for Polling Personnel held in Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 20: In a proactive move to ensure efficient conduct of the upcoming Lok Sabha Election 2024, District Election Officer, Udhampur, Saloni Rai, engaged with polling personnel at the Government Degree College for Women, Udhampur during an election training session held here today. She emphasized the importance of earnest participation in the training program to enable smooth functioning at the polling stations. The training initiative, held across various venues including Government Degree College

for Women Udhampur, Government Degree College (Boys) Udhampur, Government HSS Chenani, and Town Hall Ramnagar, witnessed a significant turnout of approximately 2150 employees.The participants received comprehensive instruction on the duties and obligations of Presiding Officers and polling officers, alongside practical demonstrations on Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).The training sessions, conducted by designated DLMTs and ALMTs, operated under the supervision of District Election Officer, Deputy DEO, Dr Anirudh Rai, DSEO, Darshan Kumar (Nodal Officer Trainings).





England at the IPL: 'Refreshed' Buttler, rusty Livingstone, and WC tune-ups for fringe players

CHENNAI: The 17th IPL season gets underway in Chennai on Friday and runs until the end of May, with strong English representation. Despite various high-profile absentees, there are 13 England players under contract across seven different franchises, with plenty at stake in the build-up to the T20 World Cup in June.

13TH HEADLINES

England's all-format players spent four months in India during the off-season across the World Cup and their Test tour, and many have opted to skip the IPL as a result in favour of some time at home. The result is that the cast of Englishmen at IPL 2024 is slightly weaker than in most recent seasons, though there are still more than a dozen players involved.

Ben Stokes and Joe Root both made themselves unavailable before the auction, while the ECB blocked Jofra Archer from entering as he continues his rehabilitation from injury. Gus Atkinson, Jason Roy (both KKR), Harry Brook (DC) and Mark Wood (LSG) have all pulled out of their deals in the past six weeks for personal reasons or to manage their workloads.

Jonny Bairstow is the only England player set for a third stint in India since October, having also featured in the World Cup and in last month's Test series. He was retained by Punjab Kings despite missing the last edition through injury and has only played a dozen T20 games since the end of IPL 2022, but has an excellent track record in the IPL across three previous seasons.

He is joined by three international team-mates at Punjab in Liam Livingstone, Chris Woakes and Sam Curran, who was retained on his record INR 18.5 crore (£1.8m) salary despite struggling for form overthe past 12 months. Trevor Bayliss, England's World Cup-winning



2019 coach, is in charge, adding to the sense that English viewers will follow Punjab's fortunes more closely than any other franchise.

Livingstone's T20 form has fallen off a cliff since IPL 2023, averaging 20.76 with a strike rate of 129.30 across his last 40 matches in the format. He is still highly likely to make England's World Cup squad, but could do with a strong tournament to rediscover his rhythm and confidence ahead of their title defence in the Caribbean.

Jos Buttler was the MVP at IPL 2022 but had a quieter season in 2023 as Rajasthan Royals failed to qualify for the knockout stages, with more ducks (five) than halfcenturies (four). He cut a tortured figure at the 50-over World Cup in India, unable to turn England's fortunes around as they crashed out in the group stages and averaging 15.33 with the bat, but has said recently that he feels "refreshed" after a rare six-week break.

"I'm feeling good, feeling refreshed," Buttler told talk SPORT last week. "[Going to] South Africa at the start of the year was brilliant for me: I really enjoyed the tournament [the SA20]... a change of environment with some different people and to get out of the England bubble for a little bit is good sometimes, and had a bit of quiet time now before a busy period with the IPL and the World Cup."

Buttler's leadership - both with the bat and in the field - was vital to England's T20 World Cup triumph in Australia in late 2022, and their coach Matthew Mott will hope that a strong season with the Royals will give Buttler the ideal preparation for their title defence in the Caribbean.

Several members of England's likely World Cup squad will find themselves running the drinks at some stage in the tournament, with the number of overseas players $allowed \,to \,feature \,for \,each \,team \,still$ capped at four per match. Will Jacks and Reece Topley are both likely to spend much of the season on the RCB bench, while Moeen Ali and Phil Salt are not guaranteed starters.

But even if they do not end up playing much, the chance to focus on T20 cricket for an extended period of time should prove beneficial: for England players who are not involved in the IPL, the only competitive cricket on offer to help prepare for the World Cup comes in the early rounds of the County Championship season.

England have only played five T20Is - all in the Caribbean in December - in the last six months and do not have any fixtures scheduled until a four-match series against Pakistan from May 22. While the outline of their squad looks relatively clear, a fringe player like Luke Wood, Tom Kohler-Cadmore or Tom Curran could yet make a late bid for inclusion based on IPL form.

Bancroft hospitalised after accident as WA mull a replacement for the final

LONDON: Cameron Bancroft was sent to hospital after a cycling accident left him concussed and ended his Sheffield Shield title dreams, with Western Australia captain Sam Whiteman expressing relief that his opening partner avoided further injuries.

Bancroft, a keen cyclist, fell off his bike and landed on his head on Sunday. He was riding by himself when the incident took place and he's since been ruled out of the final against Tasmania starting on Thursday at the WACA.

"[I'm] pretty gutted, but nice to hear he's okay and out of hospital," Whiteman told reporters on Wednesday. "I think it's pretty lucky that it wasn't much worse. He's got plenty of scratches. Hopefully we'll see him around the WACA this week, and I know that he's gutted to miss it, but he'll get around the team.

"He's done a lot of heavy lifting this year to get us into the final."

Bancroft's loss is a huge blow for WA's bid for a hat-trick of Shield titles after another impressive season where he is the second-highest runscorer with 778 at 48.62.

WA's batting order is built around the reliable opening partnership of Bancroft and Whiteman, who this season became the state's most prolific first-wicket pair. But Bancroft's absence means WA will need to rejig their opening combination with D'Arcy Short and Teague Wyllie in contention to come into the XI, while No.3 Jayden Goodwin could be promoted.

The experienced Short has only played one Shield match this season although he did make a gritty 49 batting at No.5 against Queensland on a tough WACA surface earlier this month.

Goodwin, the son of former Zimbabwe Test batter Murray Goodwin, has enjoyed a breakout season and stamped himself as WA's No.3 with a maiden first-class century against Queensland. He also scored 85 in difficult batting conditions at Bellerive Oval against Tasmania last



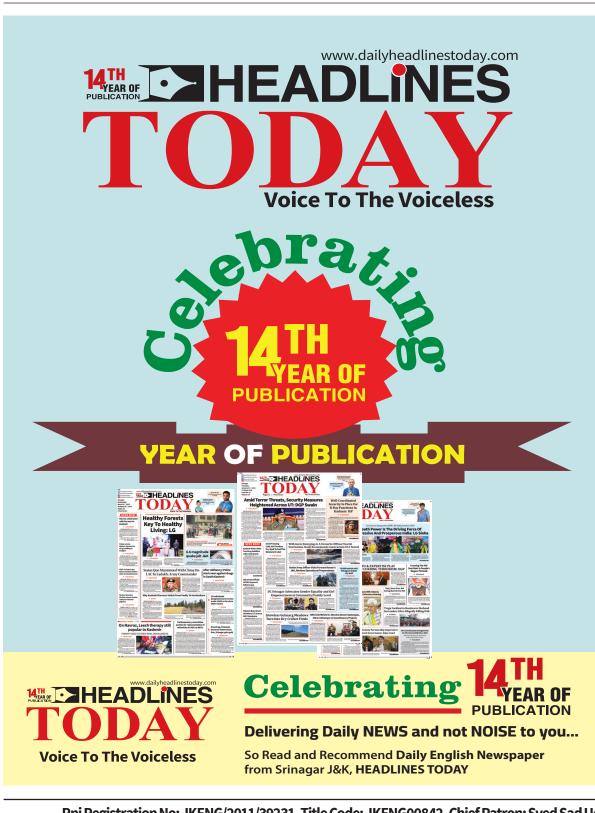
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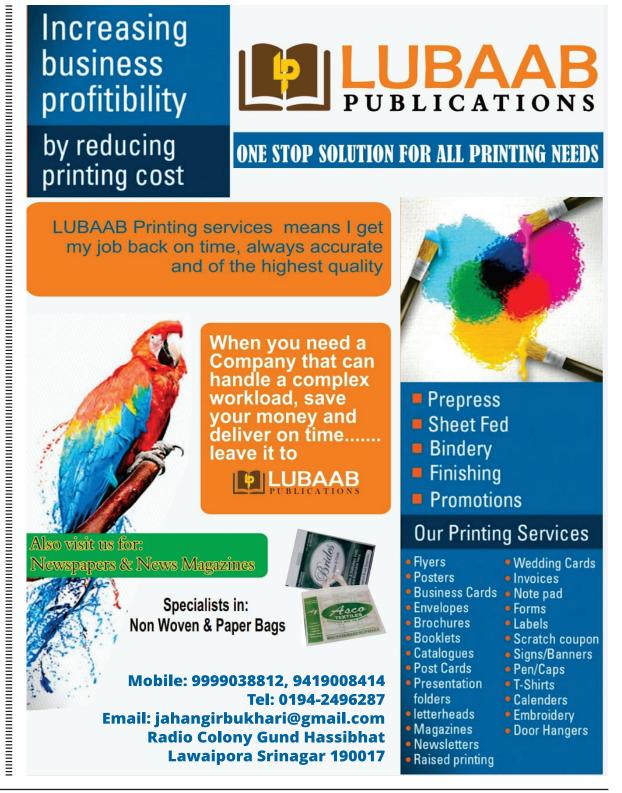
WA's hierarchy may be reluctant to move Goodwin, 22, from the No.3 position with Wyllie firming as the likeliest candidate to replace Bancroft at the top of the order.

But Wyllie, 19, has not played in the Shield since early February after struggling this season with an average of 17.80 from six matches. He started the season with a gutsy 94 off 251 deliveries at No.3 against a full-strength Victorian attack but fell away and was unsuccessfully moved down the order.

Wyllie, who played in WA's two previous title-winning teams, particularly struggled against the seaming ball and was often stuck on the crease. But he's found form in WA premier cricket with two centuries in his last three innings for Rockingham-Mandurah.

Wyllie opens at club level but has never performed the role in first-class cricket. "He's been an opener his whole career. It's where he feels most comfortable," Whiteman said. "He hasn't had the best season but I love the way he's been constantly trying to improve himself.





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